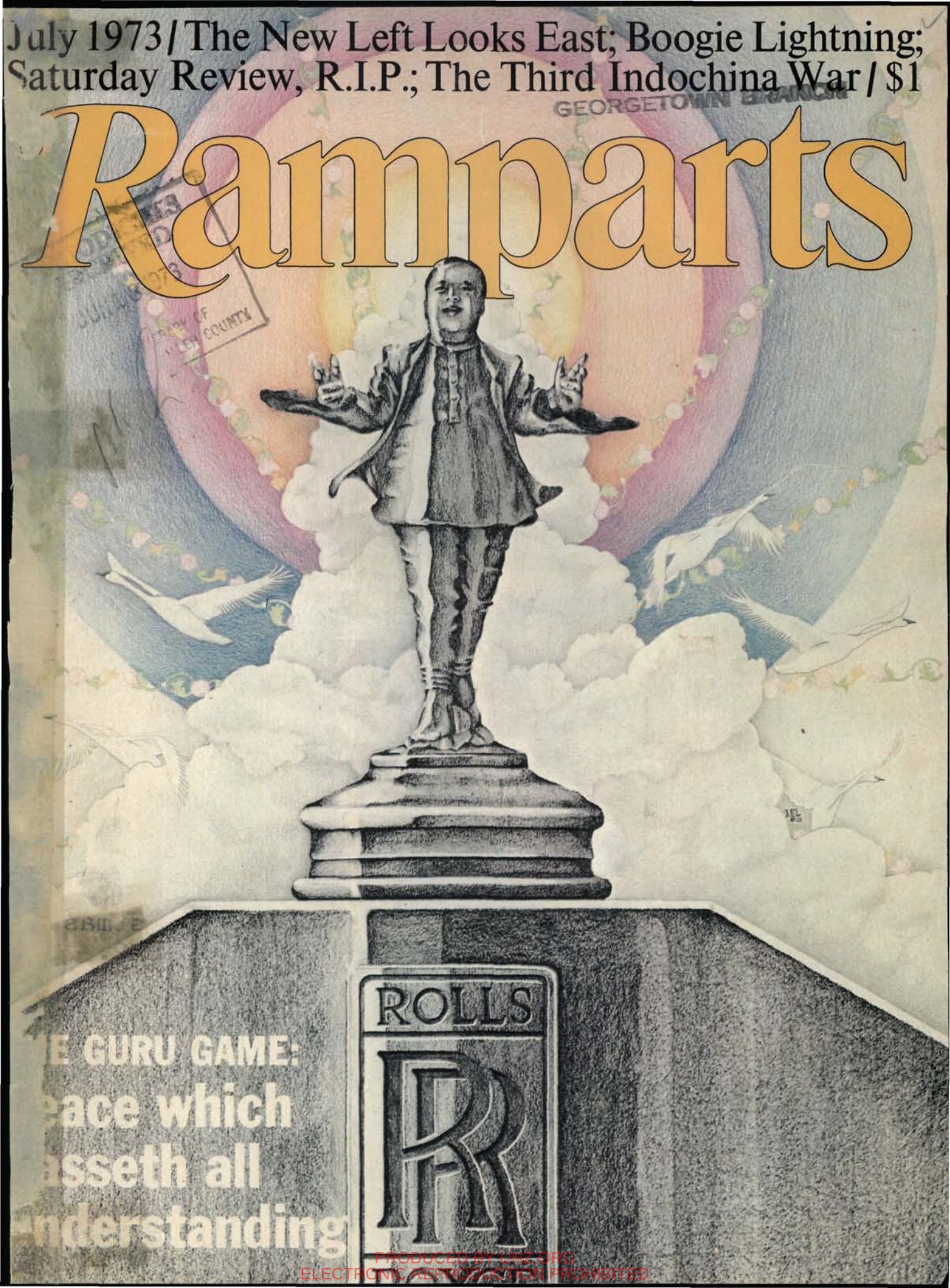
July 1973 / The New Left Looks East; Boogie Lightning; Saturday Review, R.I.P.; The Third Indochina War / $1

Ramparts

GEORGETOWN BRANCH



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Per Copy 1
Ramparts
July, 1973

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"I am pa s clearly and
powerfu gift which
was ext sheer chance
of bein right time
in hist ough it."

"Where ar nicles a major
chapter i oan Baez. Not
only does but also actual
recording assive Christmas
bombing raids in Hanoi during December of 1972.
These recordings serve as a backdrop to the title ballad which she has written, spoken and sung. The ballad captures her impressions during those ravaged and war-torn days.
Share these moments with her. The music of Joan Baez comes in many colors.

Where are you now, my son?

Side One produced by Joan Baez and Norbert Putnam Side Two produced by Joan Baez and Henry Lewy

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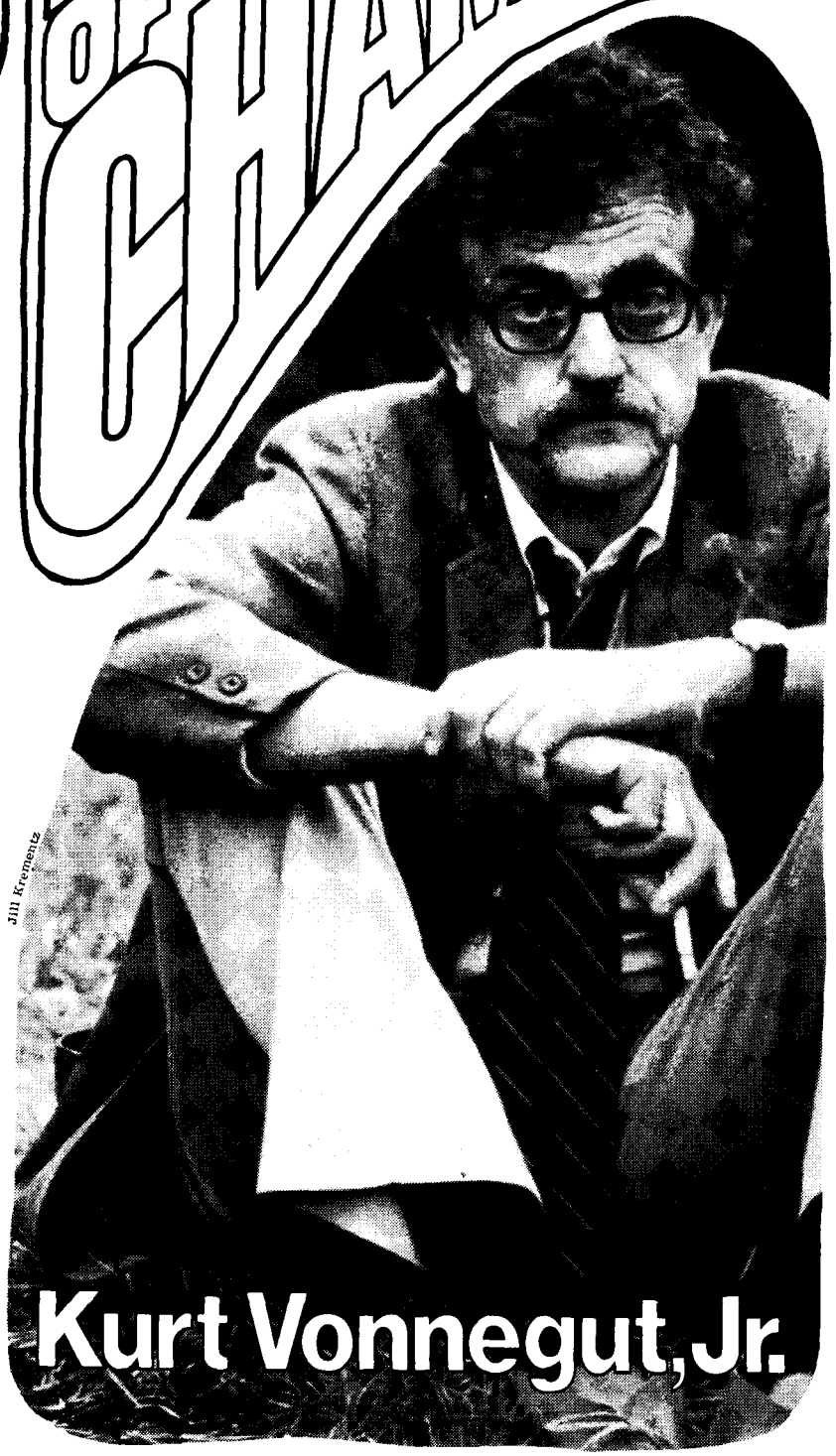
Open Kurt Vonnegut's first novel since 'Slaughterhouse-Five'. And start celebrating.

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS



In BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS, Kurt Vonnegut grants unconditional release to the characters who have served him so well. They include Kilgore Trout, the science fiction writer whose works have appeared in *Black Garterbelt* and other beaver magazines, and Eliot Rosewater, patron of the Midland City Festival for the Arts. He also introduces many new characters, among them Mary Alice Miller, women's breaststroke champion of the world.

In her advance review in *Publishers Weekly*, Barbara Bannon hails the way in which Vonnegut "takes on the whole mad scene that is America today . . . BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS runs the gamut from race tensions and sexual fantasies to pollution, the power 'bad chemicals' can exert over a human being, the sheer insanity of trying to prove you are a human being when you suspect you are just another machine in a machine-mad world. It's the wild and great good humor permeating even the darkest side of the moon that is Mr. Vonnegut's great gift."

Another, heretofore unrevealed gift: Vonnegut draws. BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS has drawings of a stork, a fire extinguisher, a smile button, etc. (Vonnegut's drawing of etc. is one of the best ever.)

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Herein

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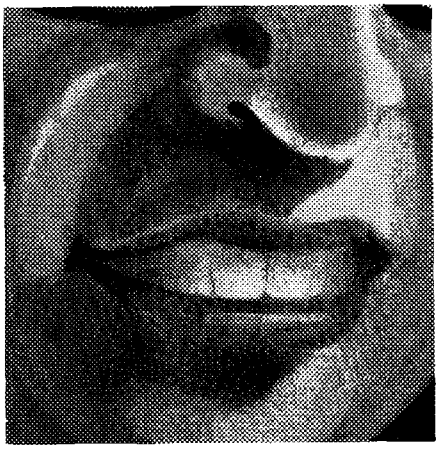
Election Special:
Standoff for Radicals
In Local Contests
Around the Country

Reports by Dan Schwartz on Madison
Edward Zuckerman on Ann Arbor
Art Goldberg on Berkeley
Richard Parker on Santa Barbara

The "New Politics" tried the polls this spring, and got mixed results. Each of these races carries a portent for the future of hometown electoral radicalism.



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Flamboyant Nick Charney swooped down on *SR*, and the old weekly became four jazzy monthlies. Sixteen months, one transcontinental move, seventeen million dollars, and several McLuhanesque fantasies later, the whole enterprise was bankrupt. Former *SR* senior editor Jon Swan was along for the whole ride, and tells what he thought of it.

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Analysis by Andrew Kopkind

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Antiwar activist Rennie Davis has turned for salvation to a 15-year-old "Perfect Master" who drives a Rolls Royce, and calls himself Guru Maharaj Ji. Here, for the first time, is the inside story of the Guru's Divine Light Mission.

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Hooker walked into Bernie Besman's Detroit recording studio one day in the late forties, and Besman invented an electric echo effect for Hooker's guitar. It was an important moment for popular music, but it was years before Hooker "arrived."

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An eyewitness account by
Judith Coburn

Once quiet Cambodia is now at the center of the next Indochina war. In Phnom Penh, U.S. officials dash around, calling in air strikes and trying desperately to patch up the Lon Nol regime. But the city is surrounded by insurgents and sits "like a ripe fruit waiting to fall." Judith Coburn spent over a year in the country as a correspondent, and writes about recent developments from that perspective.

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The women's movement.

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY NANCY LAWTON

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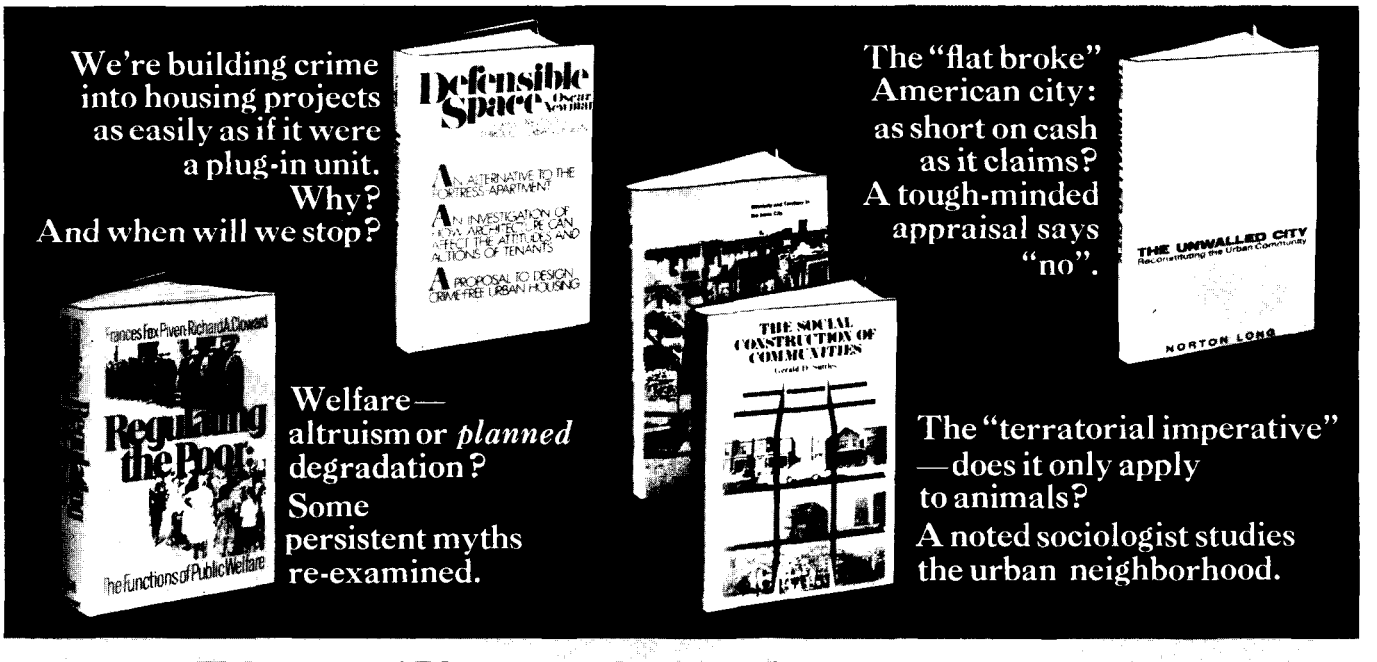
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Defensible Space
An alternative to the fortress apartment
An investigation of how architecture can affect the attitudes and actions of tenants
A proposal to design crime-free urban housing
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THE UNWALLED CITY
Reconstituting the Urban Community
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The First Word

The old slogan, always so annoying when he was winning, fits nicely now that the Watergate scandal has shown the Administration to be full of political muggers and second-storey men. Picking up the newspaper in the morning is no longer the dismal duty it once was. It is a sweet way to begin the day, with the aroma of fresh dirt dredged up and economically parcelled out by the same "eastern liberal press' whose credibility the President sent Sprio Agnew out to destroy a couple of years ago. The funnies are on the front page now.

John Mitchell is indicted. That pair of Teutonic Rasputins, Erlichman and Haldemann, are on their way back to Orange County, which so richly deserves them. And the carefully composed mask of the statesman—which Richard Nixon spent four long years trying to pull together—has slipped down, exposing the old and more familiar features of the small-time political hack. All this may not conclusively prove that there is justice in our political firmament, but it at least has the *feel* of justice, and will have to do until the real thing comes along. At bare minimum, Watergate is a sort of cosmic mockery of the huge vote Nixon won in November on the strength of his policy of detached murder in Vietnam and Babbittry at home. It is a blow to his predictable world where public reaction can be manipulated and where nothing is left to chance in capitalizing on people's worst instincts.

There is increasing talk of impeaching Nixon, some of it coming from such unlikely sources as the Congress itself. It would do the nation's soul good to have this most offensive of American politicians booted unceremoniously out of office. But if this does not come about, it will be almost as good to have him spend the next three and a half years just trying to keep his job. It will at least keep him and the executive branch out of trouble, which is more than we could have hoped for in January when his popularity stood at an all-time high. Some of the liberal pundits have reacted to talk of impeachment by portentously warning us that the only other serious impeachment proceeding in American history, against Andrew Johnson, so emasculated the office of the Presidency that it took nearly 100 years for its prestige and power to return. This observation, however, only serves to recommend swift Congressional action on the Nixon case, for the Presidency of the United States has clearly become the most dangerous office in the world and needs desperately to be put under wraps. Consider the fact that even now that his Administration has been revealed as a hotbed of petty and grand larcenies, Nixon continues to wage a devastating air war in Cambodia.

Given the confusion and alarms in high places, it would seem to be a good time for the left to make significant inroads in America. After all, the revelations of Watergate substantiate many of the claims it has been making during the past decade—not only about Nixon, but about the FBI, the CIA and American government itself. Yet one of the greatest ironies in the current political situation is that at this critical juncture, many former stalwarts of the Movement have left the left and seem to be turning East, away from American and a unique opportunity here. On page *26* Andrew Kopkind discusses the politics of this new mysticism and the reasons why New Leftists are now "dropping out" and spending time forcing their recalcitrant joints into the lotus position. On page *32* journalist Ken Kelley examines the sudden appearance of the Guru Maharaj Ji, a 15-year-old youth from India who claims to be an Avatar of God and whose ministry is blissing out increasing numbers of young Americans.

Is it possible that Rennie Davis and some of his fellow travelers on the backroads and alleyways of the spirit have indeed seen the perfect light we've all been waiting for? Or is all this frenzied spiritual activity rather an indication of the contradictions and secret crises of a society whose "normal" operations have failed so completely that people find themselves turning for relief to peculiar gods and strange auguries? Take your choice. For our part, however, we aren't hurrying to turn our editorial offices into an ashram, and the only mantra we've taken up is comprised of these words: Nixon's-the-one, Nixon's-the-one.

—The Editors

Ramparts

Vol. 12, No. 1 July 1973

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We're standing up to them in the fields.

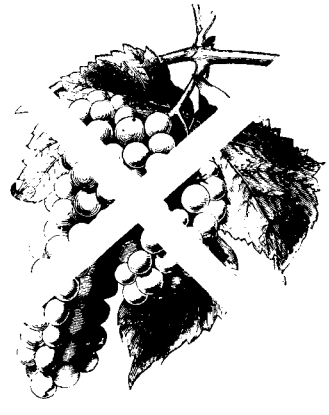
Will you stand up to them in the stores?

Boycotts are a drag. You're tired of them, just as the farm workers are tired of striking (and all that goes with it). But the workers will not be reduced to chattel again. Least of all Teamster chattel. Cesar Chavez asks consumers to unite as never before. No less will cause the growers to grant workers the simple right to vote, by secret ballot, on the union to represent them: the UFW or the Teamsters.

Three years ago a massive consumer boycott dragged growers kicking and screaming into the 20th Century. Now, when the UFW's hard-won contracts are up for renewal along come Teamster honchos who, without a word to the workers, sign a ready-made contract with the growers. That Teamster contract reinstitutes the notorious Labor Contractor hiring system, reduces the workers' already minimal pay, imposes no restrictions on the use of man-killing pesticides and leaves the workers without any effective medical benefits. There are other cruel inadequacies in the Teamsters' sweetheart contract, but that should be enough to make you lose your taste for grapes.

So how come these union-hating growers welcome Teamster advances rather than negotiate with a worker-controlled union? Growers, not surprisingly, prefer to deal with bosses who have nothing in common with the men and women who spend their lives bent over in the fields (When you read the terms of the contract this unholy alliance produced, you'll see just how well the Growers and Teamsters get along — and why it only took them all of two days to write that contract!)

Yes, the farm workers are seeking redress via the courts and by petitioning the growers for secret-ballot elections. But the wheels of justice do not move as fast as Nature grows grapes. The Teamsters are now importing scab labor (many of whom arrive not knowing they are strike-breakers and who are coerced to keep working by the Teamsters' inelegant persuasions!). The bitter fruit of this labor is now arriving at stores in your neighborhood. If these grapes sell, the next bunch of growers with UFW contracts to renew (in July) will follow the lead of their Coachella peers and invite the Teamsters to "organize" the fields on their terms i.e., a lower hourly wage; no restriction on the use of condemned sprays; reinstitution of the slave-labor contractor system (shades of the '30's!); a medical plan that neatly excludes seasonal workers! Those great humanitarians of the Teamsters' Western Conference aren't squeamish about growers using a derivative of nerve gas. Why should they be — the Teamsters' well-paid "negotiators" will never have to work in those deadly fields!



Is there any way out of the squeeze play the Teamsters and Growers have executed? To strike is to go hungry, and for many workers it will mean going to jail (and all that goes with it).

But strike we will. Strike we must, even knowing this will not prevent the harvest. We strike to reinforce our only real hope, you, the buyer of table grapes.

You are our last line of defense. You are the one critical element the Teamsters cannot control. If you are sickened by this ignoble attempt to return farm workers to the status of cattle, then the workers' cause is not yet lost.

The Growers understand sales. The memory of the last great boycott is their recurring nightmare. If the grocers find their customers turning away, the Delano and Fresno growers won't be so fast to conspire with the Teamsters when their UFW contracts expire. To be stuck with a worthless crop is a fate even worse then negotiating with a worker-controlled union.

The farm workers take no pleasure in seeing grapes go to waste. But do they give us any choice? Their feudal value system can only be affected by power. Your non-buying power!

Nothing less will cause the Growers to recognize a union that represents the workers.

Once More With Feeling: All people of goodwill can support the farm workers in their non-violent resistance to the Neanderthallic conditions imposed on them by the Grower-Teamster consortium, by 1) Boycott table grapes, starting now! 2) Contribute money to help feed the workers who now will miss the few months when they can earn any wages. The money you send will be used for basics: food, clothing medicine. Their need is staggering. 3) Continue to boycott iceberg lettuce and Safeway stores.

Take a stand.

I enclose $_____ to help the farm workers survive the coming weeks or months without a working wage.

Your Name _____

Address _____ City _____

Make Checks Payable to "United Farm Workers Union".

Mail to: United Farm Workers Union
4101 23rd Street
San Francisco 94114

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Letters

[WATERGATE]

Editors / Over Watergate we are being told over here that America is caught up in an effort to avoid have Nixon carry the can. That 'even' Democrats don't want to see the President & Presidency disgraced and invalidated. How pathetic! If there's any sanity and humanity we have go to hope that the present exposure of the Nixon machine will make impossible the continuation of his destructive package of lies in Indochina. That more and more ordinary Americans will realize that if their President, or Presidential/Executive machinery, can be grossly deceptive domestically how much more so will they be overseas.

Carry on the good work *Ramparts*. I think the attempts you are making to get to a wider audience are very well conceived–there are still too many (wilfully or accidentally) ignorant people around.

Philip G. Braithwaite
Birmingham, England

[DEATH ON THE YARD]

Editors / We applaud *Ramparts*' continuing focus on prison conditions in the United States. However, in Min Yee's "Death on the Yard" (April 1973) the author is a victim of the very illusions he tries to dispel. Some impressions have been created that we feel must be corrected.

Yee writes that with the revenge killing of a Soledad prison guard on January 16, 1970, "the poison spread." This approach ignores the fact that guards killed prisoners and provoked prisoners to kill one another for years, unnoticed by the public. It is tragic but true that had it not been for January 16th, the murders of three black prisoners by a guard on January 13th would have passed silently into oblivion. The poison is not in the rising up of prisoners, but in the very notion of prisons and in the society that incarcerates men and women within them.

Most of Yee's piece concerns August 21, 1971, when George Jackson, two other prisoners, and three guards were slain. Six black and brown prisoners now stand charged with murder and conspiracy. A judge has forbidden all parties to the case from making any statement about that day's events. Unfortunately, Yee has given the district attorney a way around the court order.

Yee's rather sensational description of the 21st is presented as truth. In fact, his information comes straight from the transcript testimony before the grand jury that indicted the "San Quentin Six." Such grand juries are notorious tools of the prosecution. They are composed of people chosen personally by Superior Court judges, with witnesses selected and coached by the district attorney. The accused are not present, nor may they have a lawyer present. They may not cross-examine witnesses, nor offer their own. The prosecutor is in complete control. Yee also fails to mention that three mmembers of the August 21st grand jury walked out of the proceedings in an unprecedented protest, denouncing the district attorney's slanted presentation and high-handed attitude towards the jury–which ultimately indicted by a vote of only twelve out of nineteen members.

Throughout his article Yee falls into traps set by prosecutors and prison officials. "What compelled the blacks . . . to kill seven white guards," Yee asks–even though he has just noted the *acquittals* of the Soledad Seven and the Soledad Brothers, with the cases of Gibson and Justice and the San Quentin Six not yet come to a verdict! The assumption of the guilt of black prisoners is compounded: on January 16, 1970, "the black prisoners were incensed. Within an hour a white guard . . . lay dying." Moreover, the Soledad Brothers' legal staff interviewed dozens of white and brown prisoners who were also incensed by the district attorney's whitewash of the murders of three black prisoners by a prison guard. To omit mention of them is to participate in the prison staff's tactic of stereotyping and pitting races against one another, negating the steadily growing unity of prisoners.

We are compelled to add one more name to Yee's roster of racist prison officials: Captain Charles Moody, in charge of the guard staff at Soledad during the O-wing murders and the killings of Shull and Mills, and a man singularly responsible for the terror and racism suffered by Soledad convicts. In both "Soledad" cases, Moody threatened witnesses with endless prison terms and even death unless they gave the "right" testimony.

California's highest court has just denied the San Quentin Six the right to court-appointed attorneys whom they know and trust. The trial judge has appointed other attorneys who themselves want no part of the case, but who have been denied the right to withdraw. The defendants must be represented by lawyers who will work vigorously on their behalf. Without state appointments, the cost of conducting an adequate defense is enormous. Contributions are desperately needed.

The San Quentin Six
Legal Defense Fund
558 Capp Street
San Francisco, Calif.
94110

Editor's reply: No doubt, there was much left out of Min Yee's article; inevitably so, we might add, insofar as it was excerpted from a 300-age book due to be published this month by Harper's Magazine Press. Yee goes to some lengths in his book to document precisely the points which the San Quentin Six Legal Defense Fund criticizes *Ramparts* for omitting–the history of guards killing prisoners and provoking prisoners to kill other prisoners; the events surrounding the August 21 grand jury; the critical role of Captain Charles Moody in the tragic chain of events. Unfortunately, space did not permit us to include all the material from Yee's book, which we find important and provocative.

As for the story of August 21, we fail to see what precisely in Yee's article was prejudicial to the San Quentin Six–unless it can be said that *any* account of that day's events is harmful to them. We don't believe that. Something gruesome happened in the Adjustment Center on August 21, and something tragic in the most profound sense of the word. It is necessary to acknowledge that, if we are to appreciate the real importance of Yee's indictment of the prison system.

It was, in any event, certainly not our intention to undercut their defense of the San Quentin Six, or to presume their guilt. On the contrary, Yee's article–and even more his book–draws in graphic terms the ultimate responsibility of the California correctional system for these deaths. In that light, we urge our readers to support the San Quentin Six in their attempts to secure justice.

[POWs]

Editors / Thank you very much for Ngo Vinh Long's report on the returning American POWs ["Their Glory is All Moonshine"] in the May issue. It was like a breath of fresh air after all of the sugar-coated reports about returning heroes that have been fed to us by the established media. His exposure of their complicity in war crimes and his comparisons of North and South Vietnamese treatment of prisoners serve to point out the context in which the prisoner releases must be viewed.

I hope that in some future issue you can report on the real heroes of the American involvement in Vietnam – namely, those people who have accepted exile or imprisonment rather than become co-conspirators in the crime of America's devastation of Indochina.

Richard Mumma, III
Cherry Hill, N.J.

[ELTON JOHN]

Editors / I couldn't help but comment on the letter by Frank B. Coleman, IV, concerning the accusation that Elton John is gay.

Horrors! Mr. Coleman's favorite star has actually been ACCUSED of being (shudder) gay! What a slanderous, low-down crime, eh Mr. Coleman?

As a gay that has been involved with movement organizations the past five years, I recognize this type of neanderthal intel-

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lect; so many of today's hokey liberals reek of it. Reasoning like Mr. Coleman's is why Archie Bunker says: "There is a little of me in all of you." So, Mr. Coleman is insulted that Elton John is reported to be gay. I despise gay baiting, but I despise blatant bigotry and apparent gross ignorance even more. Then he ends the letter with an "I dare you to print this" type ending. How masculine, Mr. Coleman!

With Fourteenth Century thinking like this, no wonder we have the Watergates, the police murders and political crimes perpetrated on us. So many middle-class liberals say they support change, just as long as it doesn't have to do with things like basic humanitarian love and kindness.

Michael T. Manning
Hollywood, Calif.

[LBJ]

Editors / I have never read such a disgusting piece of writing as the "Last Roundup" by Andrew Kopkind (*Ramparts*, April 1973). I am truly grateful that LBJ cannot see this attack on his character, for he certainly does not deserve such abuse.

Nancy Roe
Toronto, Canada

[BOSTON HOSPITAL]

Editors / With reference to Mr. Jonathan Kozol's article about Boston City Hospital in the April issue of *Ramparts*, I would like him to know that my experiences at this hospital were very different.

In 1968 I was a ward patient at Boston City Hospital. I did not have any money at all and my medical insurance was uncertain. I was seriously ill and received absolutely marvelous care. The doctors were unfailingly kind, courteous and skilled. I couldn't possibly have received better medical care anywhere else. The kindness I received certainly did not depend upon money or social position.

Ellen Hennessy
Boston, Mass.

[MORE FEEDBACK]

Editors / I have found *Ramparts* to be increasingly difficult to read. It seems that you are involved with an almost esoteric type of journalism. Frankly, I'm sick of Ford Motor Nader Kissinger astro-intestinal pollutants.

You need articles which provide a change of pace: more musical coverage; revolutionary breakthroughs in the arts; the new "back-to-the-roots-radical" trends in religious education; C. J. Jung; etc.

I don't suspect that you will change. But please, relax.

Dick Leng
(no address)

Editors / For a long time *Ramparts* was one of the best pieces of journalism on the left. But since the magazine's decision to broaden its appeal, *Ramparts* has consistently failed to provide a leftist analysis which is needed to fully comprehend the events and issues of our day. Not only is this radical perspective missing, but the editors have seen fit to fill their pages with counterculture and other articles irrelevant to the movement.

Therefore it is with regret that we cancel our subscription.

Frances & Eve Suracki
Norristown, Penn.

Editors / We do not feel the need for any substantial change in your editorial/publishing policy. Rather we hope you can hold the line. Perhaps developments now unfolding will provide an opportunity for further investigative reporting such as you have so ably and intrepidly pioneered in the past.

If events work out so that a linkage can be made between Watergate and your brilliant past presentations of the Kennedy assassination, your agility as compared with establishment media will open a wider current readership.

M. S. Ligda
Hermes Press
Los Altos, Calif.

[REMEMBER CANADA]

Editors / I have learned never to expect any kind of true presentation of the ruthless pursuit of the takeover of Canada that has waxed and waned, but never died, since the volunteers from Boston drove out the Acadians. Therefore it was no shock to me to find a very good article on the problems in Alaska with not one word about how many people in the U.S. are trying to solve some of them by spoiling (and gaining even more control over) Canada. In *Ramparts*. You may protest about what the U.S. does in other areas of the world, but so far as Canada is concerned, you are typical products of your country and your schoolrooms.

Iris R. T. Jones
(Canadian Citizen)
Villanova, Penn.

[MARXIST FORUM]

Editors / The Marxist Forum, sponsored by the Radical Caucus in English and the Modern Languages, is seeking two papers of a special sort as part of the program planned for the Modern Language Association conference in Chicago, December 2nd to 30th, 1973. We are looking for short papers (approximately 15 minutes in presentation) which demonstrate Marxism as a critical tool capable of elucidating literary works: one paper covering a well-known contemporary work, the second covering a familiar work from the established canon. We would especially like the sort of presentation that might be made to an undergraduate class in literature, that is, a concrete and comprehensible discussion rather than a critical debate on a theoretical level. The deadline is August 1.

Paul N. Siegel
English Department
Long Island University
Brooklyn, NY 11201

(Continued on page 61)

COSMOPOLITAN
Helen Gurley Brown, Editor · 224 West 57th Street, New York, New York, 10019, (212) 265-7300

February 27, 1973

Robin dear,

Your article is absolutely smashing! We're all enjoying it so much. I sent it to my boss - he'll love being referred to as the cross I have to bear! - and everyone in the office is madly reading. You were so conscientious and spent so much time with everybody...that does show up in the final product - along with the good writing! Thanks for being so good to us.

All my best wishes,

Ms. Robin Reisig
Ramparts Magazine
2054 University Avenue
Berkeley, California 94704

HGB/stw

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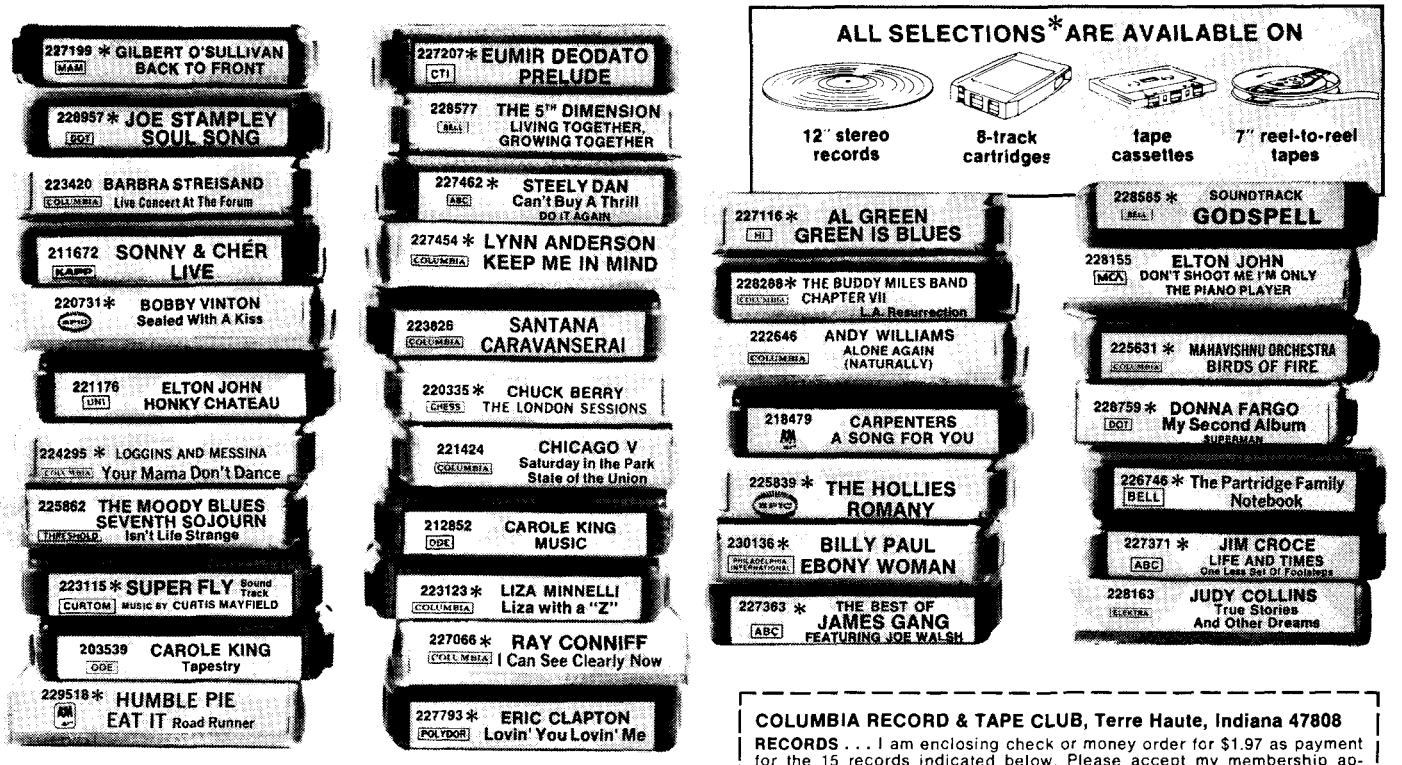
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Election Special:

STANDOFF FOR RADICALS IN LOCAL CONTESTS AROUND THE COUNTRY

"It's ballots or bullets," said Malcolm X, and in recent years—as radical activism has lost some of its militant edge—there has been a surge of interest in local electoral politics among veterans of the various left movements of the late '60s. They have achieved some noteworthy successes. In Detroit, they elected a radical lawyer to the bench, and in Boston they unseated a corrupt judge. In Berkeley and Ann Arbor they established a presence on city councils. This spring, Black Panther Chairman Bobby Seale forced the incumbent mayor of Oakland into a runoff. To be sure, there have been setbacks as well, and in seeking to cover this trend as it develops, we have solicited articles on recent elections in which radicals have played an important role. Here, then, are those reports.

MADISON ELECTS RADICAL MAYOR

by Dan Schwartz

In his first week in office this spring as the "radical" Mayor of Madison, Wisconsin, Paul Soglin exerted a great deal of nervous energy—arranging papers in semi-neat piles on his desk, emptying ashtrays and throwing stray food wrappings in the basket. "You know I'm going to Washington to meet with officials next week over federal funds," the mustached Chicago native remarked one day that week, rearranging his desk for the third time within an hour. "I don't even think I know anyone in Washington."

If the 28-year-old lawyer and veteran student activist at the University of Wisconsin seemed uncertain about his first steps, it was not surprising. As an alderperson for four years from a predominantly student ward, Soglin had often been the target of the very office he now occupies. "The city is subject to radical takeover," the conservative Mayor William Dyke warned when Soglin coordinated student demonstrations a year before this spring's election. In a sense, the good mayor was right. Soglin's inaugural address officially launched a new era in Madison's electoral politics with an attack on President Nixon's renewed bombing of Cambodia. It was a statement rooted in the draft resistance movement of the mid-60's.

Soglin's biography reads like the chronology of the left. He was active in the civil rights movement as a campus SNCC treasurer, a participant in one of the nation's first anti-war protests at Wisconsin in 1963, and a chairman of a strike committee that coordinated protests in 1967 over campus recruitment for Dow Chemical, the manufacturer of napalm. "I still have the scars on my leg from the protest," Soglin recalls of the police riot that left many hospitalized and the faculty and students of the University outraged.

In 1968, after graduation and participation in national student political activities (such as the National Student Association), Soglin was elected to the Madison City Council. As one of the first student alderpersons, he quickly learned the lessons of big city government. "It was then that I learned how repressive a city could be," he recalls. "That was when I began to become aware of the mundane things like sewers and zoning which have so much to do with a city's political structure."

Soglin's election to the City Council spelled the first of many bitter confrontations he was to have with the conservative Mayor Dyke in the chambers of the city and in the streets. In the spring of 1969, for instance, Soglin was twice arrested by Madison police during disturbances provoked by Dyke's veto of a block party permit request by the Mifflin co-op, the symbolic heart of the student-radical community. Following a three day jury trial, Soglin was fined $20 for disobeying a policeman's order. He was also given a free haircut in the jail. The second arrest was overturned.

For four years Dyke and Soglin mixed it up in the headlines. Whatever the issue—a Weatherman speaker in town, Cambodia protests, drug busts or salt in the streets for snow removal

Madison Mayor Paul Soglin

PHOTO BY GEOFF SIMON

Dan Schwartz is a former editor of the Daily Cardinal, *the University of Wisconsin student newspaper. He has written for Pacific News Service and the Madison* Capital Times, *and is now freelancing in the Madison area.*

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—the two men emerged on opposite ends of the political spectrum. In the winter of 1972, Soglin infuriated the mayor and the already hostile police force by releasing to the press the names and photos of 19 undercover agents. Soglin said he was protesting the waste of taxpayers' money on massive arrests of marijuana users while hard drug dealers went unpunished.

Yet Soglin was not merely a tribune for the left. "I think the wrong things have been emphasized about my election," the new mayor noted in regards to the national attention which greeted his victory in the Wisconsin capital. "It often sounds like to run for office in a city like Madison all you have to do is put together a good organization and walk in. Everyone neglects the fact that it took five years of work, that it was a gradual process of electing people from districts where students were concentrated and an even more gradual change in outlying district from conservative to moderate and liberal.

Only two years ago, Soglin finished a poor third in the primary race for mayor. But as an alderperson he was developing ties in the working-class and professional communities. His growing reputation went far to legitimize radical politics within the structure of city government.

In the 1973 primary, still eschewing Democratic party status and working with a loose coalition of liberals, students and radicals, Soglin muscled his way through a four way primary race to earn another shot at Dyke. Soglin's primary victory was the more important because students turned out in relatively low numbers. This unexpected city-wide support produced a key note of Soglin's victory speech. "We've taken the traditional romantic factions and we've welded them into a majority and I'm speaking of labor, minority groups, professional people and of course students."

Former Madison Mayor William Dyke

PHOTO BY RICHARD JAFFE

In the April run-off, Soglin swept the student-dominated wards—fortified by a massive voter registration drive—with vote totals surpassing 90 percent and held on to a slim margin over incumbant Mayor Dyke. Dyke, a former Madison TV personality, had stressed morality and the "decent voter" in his bid for re-election. The bible-thumping Dyke campaign included a four page newsletter entitled "Lest We Forget" in which Soglin's radical past was garrishly emphasized through old pictures and newspaper headlines. But Dyke was unable to isolate Soglin as a threatening radical.

For the Council, whose moderate swing votes control power, for the radical student community who claim Soglin as their own, and for the Democratic hacks who say they "own Soglin," the first year in office will be a critical testing ground. Most observers feel Soglin will need at least two terms to accomplish any real reform since the mayor's terms only runs for two years.

In facing his first term in office, Soglin seems sensitive to the criticism that his new image spells the end of his relationship to the left and the beginning of his entrance into the Democratic party. "The left is already beginning, to a limited degree, to write me off," he said shortly after he assumed office. "Right after my election I was on the other side. I don't think I have to be. I'll speak up if it's right to speak up. My record over the last ten years shows I'm not chickenshit."

"You see it's going to take me three months to solidify power. If I push for drastic change right away I won't get Council support and this whole thing that we worked for is going to be sliced to ribbons. Later on, when I've demonstrated I know what I'm doing administratively, the Council will give me the benefit of the doubt; then I'll also know what's happening within city departments."

Soglin still calls himself a radical although after weeks of media interviews he had become cynical about the word. "I still think I'm a radical," he told the Madison *Capital Times* just before the election. "But the label scares people and then they don't like to see what I'm talking about like stopping airport expansion or new highways. . . . If I wanted to sell out I could have done this thing a whole lot easier by joining the Democratic party. But I'm not going to join. As mayor I'm aware of the party, I can't run the city without it. There are good people in it and I'm just going to look at them as people."

A frequent criticism of Soglin as alderperson, and now, as mayor, is that he operates too often as an individual without a party or a clearcut political platform. But Soglin does not believe a party is necessary—and he feels his election bears him out. "I still hold," he says, "that the district and ward organizations are still functioning—especially in the inner city. I'm not going to . . . create a party or an organization while in office. People in public office shouldn't create power from office."

"Soglin is a believer in the concept of the organic community," a leftist Soglin watcher observes. "Right now he is in an historical role that's hard to realize. He represents a coalition of liberals and the left. He doesn't want anyone to own him and he wants to be fair—to open up the government to all the people, to get new input into city committees. Madison still has a small town government and it's possible that he can accomplish a lot. But he's under tremendous pressure from the Dems and if he does a good job for them the possibilities of his going higher are tremendous."

In his first week in office, it also looked like Soglin might have to worry about inheriting only half the city from Dyke. Shortly after Soglin's victory, it was exposed that Dyke had allowed the second in command of the Madison Police Department to remove from the city-county building confi-

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dential police dossiers on political activists. The caper was labeled "Madison's Watergate" by the local press, which called for a full investigation. The police officer involved retired, a letter of reprimand was written to him and the new, more liberal, police chief has stated no one will see the files and that names will be deleted seven years after their appearance. "The day of political spying is over," he said. Dyke defended his action, saying he did it on behalf of the safety of the citizens of Madison. Soglin remained curiously silent on the affair even though speculation has centered on the possibility that the files include a dossier on him.

The pre-inaugural scandal demonstrated many of the tensions lingering in the Madison city hall from the past decade of student activism. The most explicit source of that tension sits on the seventh floor of the building, three floors over Soglin's head. He, too, is 28 and was a participant in the University of Wisconsin's student movement. His name is Karl Armstrong and he is accused of first degree murder stemming from the bombing of the University's Army Mathematics Research Center (AMRC) in 1970. The explosion killed a young post-doctoral physics researcher working late in the basement.

Surprisingly, the Armstrong case did not play the role in the Dyke-Soglin campaign that many thought it would. Soglin workers called Armstrong their "Eagleton" and were alert to the possibility of an Armstrong controversy. Except for a few questions at meetings, the controversy never materialized even though Armstrong was extradited from Canada in the middle of the campaign amid extraordinary security measures. He will probably be brought to trial in Madison sometime this summer.

The case has already drawn national attention as well as local political activity. A defense committee has held several marches and begun extensive fundraising activities. Armstrong was arraigned on $450,000 bail and has retained movement lawyer Bill Kunstler to defend him, along with local attorney Melvin Greenberg and Milwaukee attorney William Coffey.

The bombing of the AMRC, a unique million dollar military think-tank supported by the Defense Department, was Madison's most militant and controversial act of resistance to the war in Vietnam. Armstrong, a hometown boy, has attracted more curiosity than hostility since his return. Soglin wrote a column on Armstrong in the campus daily on the day he was caught in Toronto, in which he said "At this point it would be the height of hypocrisy to abandon Karleton Armstrong. Whether Armstrong is innocent or guilty, anyone who conceptually supported ridding this campus of the AMRC, no matter whether they approved or disapproved of the bombing itself, must come to his defense." The new mayor says he will not retract that statement nor comment on the case.

The verdict on Armstrong, and the case's impact on Soglin, if any, will be determined in the next two years. So, too, will the response of the new radical mayor to the paradoxes of power and politics. If there is any indication of how Soglin will play the game, it might have come during one speech he made before a group of real estate investors during the campaign. Soglin spoke to their main concern—namely, the question of speculation in the downtown residential areas. The candidate warned them that if he was elected there would be no more zoning manipulations and no more speculative development in residential areas. One of the investors joked "Does that mean me?" Soglin stared and said "Yes".

He lost their votes and money, but he wasn't chickenshit. Clean desk and all. ■

HUMAN RIGHTS PARTY SUFFERS SETBACK IN ANN ARBOR

by Edward Zuckerman

Ann Arbor, Michigan, is a classic example of the curious politics of a college town. For years, the faculty element of the University of Michigan, which contributes about 30,000 students to the town's population of about 100,000, has played a major role in the local Democratic Party. As a result, Ann Arbor Democrats have long been on the left-liberal fringe of the party. On the other side of town, both geographically and politically, stand the local business interests, the "townies," the Republicans. They look toward the local Democrats with a peculiarly college-town brand of inter-party scorn.

"A University professor is a person who's never been out of school," says Lloyd Fairbanks, a Republican city councilman and bank vice-president. "They've never had to make that money they get paid with. They've never had to put together a profit-making business."

Republican Councilman John McCormick, an attorney, agrees with his colleague. "This city's politics are crazy," he says. "If you look up at the sky and say 'The moon is yellow,' somebody from the University will say, 'The moon's not really yellow. Actually it's purple, and the gases around the moon just make it *appear* yellow.' And the next day a group will form and they'll march downtown with picket signs saying the moon is purple. Then they'll call their candidates and say, 'We won't vote for you unless you support our position.' " As an example of such madness, McCormick cited a sit-in staged by Chicanos in support of the lettuce boycott.

In 1969, for the first time in recent years, the Democrats captured the mayorship and a majority on the City Council. By 1972, they had lost their majority but retained the mayor's seat with its veto power. And then two things happened: the voting age was lowered to 18, and students were allowed to vote where they go to school. The Democrats cast loving glances in the direction of the University and saw visions of a permanent majority.

There is, however, many a slip between one thing and another. In last year's City Council election (half the ten Council seats are up each April), the Democrats did not win a single seat. This April, the Republicans, campaigning on a platform of "responsibility," strengthening the police force

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and better garbage collection, won both the mayorship and a commanding majority on Council. Although it worked to the Republicans' advantage, it was not the Republicans who wrought this rapid deflation of Democratic dreams. It was instead the newest phenomonon on the Ann Arbor political scene—the Human Rights Party.

The HRP is a direct outgrowth of the student movement at the University of Michigan. Jerry DeGrieck, an HRP city councilman formerly active in the University student government and one faction of the campus SDS, recalls, "We'd call rallies and keep seeing the same faces. We decided it was time to reach new people. And we realized that many people regard electoral politics as their only legitimate political activity."

So a group of student radicals, coming mostly from SDS and the International Socialists, formed the Radical Independent Party in 1971. It later linked up with the state-wide Human Rights Party being organized by dissident left-wing Democrats. They circulated petitions to get a spot on the ballot in last year's City Council election, and, defying all predictions, won 24 percent of the vote citywide and elected two Council members in the wards with the highest concentrations of students.

While winning those seats, the HRP also won enough votes in the other three wards to give all those races to Republicans. The resulting line-up on the Council (on which the mayor has a vote) was five Republicans, four Democrats, and two "Humans," as the HRP members call themselves.

The following year was one of constant compromise. "You can't show people why a third party is necessary by showing up and saying the Republicans and Democrats are full of shit and these are our demands and bye-bye," said DeGrieck. Instead, the HRP and the Democrats began to get together. With Democratic support, the Council enacted HRP proposals that made it illegal to discriminate against gays in housing or employment and forbade employment agencies to supply scab labor to companies undergoing strikes. In addition, the Council endorsed the lettuce and Farah boycotts, passed a unit-pricing law,

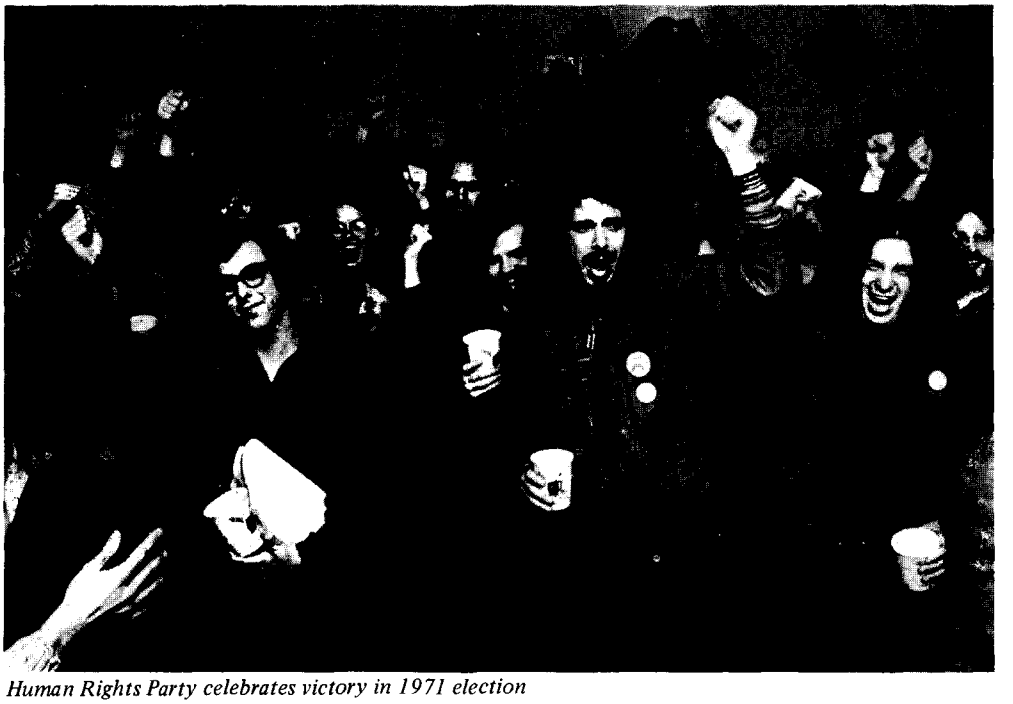

PHOTO BY THOMAS R. COPI

Human Rights Party celebrates victory in 1971 election

banned non-returnable bottles and designated one week last June as Gay Pride Week. And there was, of course, the law that made Ann Arbor famous: the ordinance that reduced the penalty for smoking, possessing or selling marijuana to a $5 fine. The law was struck down by a local judge last fall because of its conflict with state law, but, while the case is being appealed, the $5 law remains in effect. (In the meantime, nobody who pleads innocent is being convicted. The state police lab, which must certify that the weed is marijuana in contested cases, is peeved at Ann Arbor for not taking the drug menace seriously and puts all samples from there at the bottom of the pile.)

While pleased with these successes, the HRP Council members, DeGrieck and Nancy Wechsler, have worried about their ultimate political effect. "I'm not just a socialist," says Wechsler, "I'm a revolutionary. So I think about what we can bring up on Council that will make people aware of the contradictions of capitalism. . . The hardest question we have is when to settle for what we don't want. The question is: Does it really represent some kind of change? Even when we accept a compromise, we always make the point that it's not enough."

Among HRP proposals on which Democrats wouldn't compromise were cutting off city services to war industries, banning the importation of strike-breakers from out of the city, establishing rent control and appointing public housing tenants to the city housing commission.

Still, the Democrats generally felt ideologically closer to the HRP than to the Republicans. "The gap in rhetoric is great," said outgoing Mayor Robert Harris, a University of Michigan law professor, before the April election. "HRP says 'We want socialism and total public ownership of everything in the world,' and the Democrats won't say that. But when you get away from the rhetoric, there is very little difference operationally between the HRP and the Democrats, while the gap between the Democrats and the Republicans is wild."

Accordingly, when the time came to decide how to spend $1.4 million in revenue-sharing funds early this year, the Democrats took one look at the Republican proposal, which allocated $500,000 to debt retirement and $200,000 to keep garbage cans from remaining at curbside between pick-ups, and promptly fled to make a deal with the HRP, whose proposal was heavily weighted in favor of child care, health care and drug programs.

The Republicans, of course, have consistently found the HRP repulsive—as a matter of style, at least. But it is significant that the Republicans have no *political* complaints about the HRP except to say that they resemble

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Democrats. Republican Fairbanks goes so far as to call the two parties the "Big Democrats" and the "Little Democrats." That observation, even coming from so dubious a source, still helps explain what happens when elections roll around.

The Democrats and the HRP find themselves competing for much the same constituency. "They'd come in with an idea for an ordinance," said former Mayor Harris, "and we'd do the hard work of research and drafting. Then, after it passed, we'd get into a shouting match over who deserved credit for it."

Added Democratic Councilman Norris Thomas: "We take a lot of this shit because we believe in what the HRP is doing. And they embarrass us into doing things that we should be doing. But I think of them as the Little Democrats too. I wish they had joined the party. We just fight about this petty shit. It's ridiculous."

As the April election approached, and it became clear to practically everybody that the Republicans were headed for victory, the Democrats made even more woeful noises. "The Republicans have only 40 percent of the votes," said Harris, "but we're just giving the city back to them. It's a tragedy."

When the election results were in, it turned out that the Republicans had done even better than everyone had expected. Their mayoral candidate came in with not 40 but 47 percent of the vote. Republican Council candidates pulled 45 percent of the vote city-wide and two of them carried their wards with more than 60 percent of the votes.

Ann Arbor's new mayor, James Stephenson

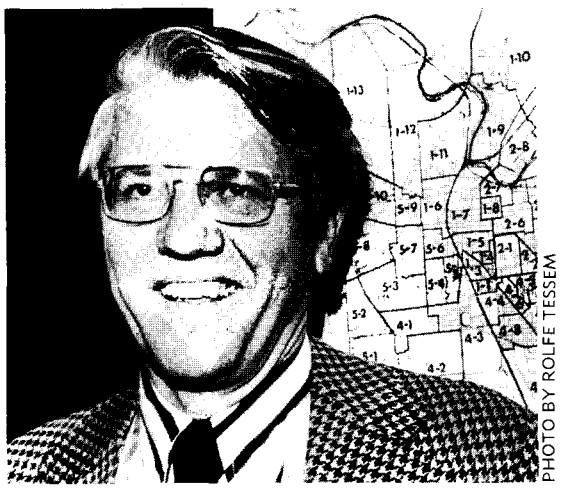

PHOTO BY ROLFE TESSEM

The big loser in the election was the HRP. It won only 16 percent of the total vote, down from 24 percent last year. The Democrats won two Council seats, carrying both of the wards that the HRP carried last year. On the day after the election, the Ann Arbor papers were talking about the "death" of the HRP. And Democratic Councilman Thomas was moved to proclaim, "We won the battle but we lost the war. Next year we're going to win the battle and the war."

What happened to the HRP was, simply, that the students stayed home. And, despite optimistic talk by HRP members of expanding support among blacks and workers, the great strength of the party still lies in the student population if it lies anywhere. (Any doubt about the party's continuing student roots may be dispelled by attending one of its mass meetings, which elect the steering committee that sets HRP policy and can dictate the votes of HRP Council members. The mass meetings both look and sound like SDS meetings, circa 1969. The rhetoric and hair are long, procedural debates are protracted and enervating, and factionalism is developing.)

Last year, 55 percent of eligible students voted, most of them for the HRP. This year only a meagre 33 percent made it to the polls. Things were so bad that a Michigan Daily photographer sent out to get a standard shot of students voting came back hours later and reported that he couldn't *find* any students voting. The Daily ran a picture of an empty voting booth instead. Over at HRP headquarters, a losing Council candidate moaned as the votes came in, "Those stoned freaks at Alice Lloyd [a dormitory], why didn't they vote?"

Why not indeed? "A year ago," said DeGrieck, "there was a lot of excitement in the campaign. The HRP was new, and the difference between us and the Democrats was very obvious. This year the Democrats ran a 19-year-old radical-sounding woman student and a black in our strong wards. A lot of people stayed home because they incorrectly assumed that it didn't make that much difference."

The HRP continues to insist, despite what the Republicans, the Democrats and the voters say, that there *is* a difference, that the Democratic Party will never bring about a fundamental social change, not to mention socialism, and that the role of a third party can be crucial in accomplishing meaningful reforms while gaining a "legitimate" and prominent forum for radical ideas. In addition, the very existence of the HRP continues to push the Democrats to the left. All five Democratic Council candidates this year were women or black, and it was hard to distinguish the liberals from the radicals.

"But we can't look out for the interests of the Democrats," says DeGrieck. "It really doesn't make much difference anyway. The only reason we got much accomplished last year was because neither the Democrats nor the Republicans had a majority. And they voted together against us on every really crucial issue.

"If we accept the lesser-evilism trip and say, 'Well, we won't push this year because we don't want to split the vote,' then we'll be saying the same thing next year and the year after that, and we'll never reach our goal.

"I don't know if there will be a revolution in this country for a hell of a long time, to say the least. And nobody is giving us a blueprint of how to get there. But I think, at this point in time, in this town, a third party is a good thing to invest energy in.... Despite what you may have heard, we're not dead. We still have our two seats on Council. We still have an active hardcore base. And we're going to stick with it." ■

RADICALS WIN INITIATIVES, LOSE COUNCIL RACE IN BERKELEY

by Art Goldberg

This was to be the year the radicals took control of the nine-member Berkeley City Council. The radical April Coalition, based in

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the student community around the University of California, had won three Council seats in the spring of 1971, running effectively as a slate of four against an array of conservative, moderate and liberal candidates. It seemed at the time that the same tactics would complete their seizure of power by the next election. But in the two years between Council elections, the Coalition, distracted by clashes of ideas and personalities, slipped out of focus; the conservative-to-liberal forces, fearing above all else a radical city government, set aside their differences to run a lavishly-funded slate of their own, and retained a five-vote majority for the next two years.

Nevertheless, the radical defeat was far from complete. While only one Coalition candidate was elected to the Council, several radical-backed ballot initiatives were passed with solid majorities. And the electoral strength of the April Coalition was actually greater than it had been in 1971, although 3000 fewer voters went to the polls. The Coalition failed to rouse its first constituency—the students—as easily as it had expected; but it seemed clear that the radicals city-wide appeal had grown. All in all, the final returns brought mixed blessings—and they came after two difficult years for the April Coalition.

During the spring and summer of 1971, the Council had seemed locked in a marathon stalemate. On one side were four conservatives and moderates. On the other were the three radicals plus the young, liberal, black mayor—Warren Widener, a former councilman. The latter had won the mayorality race in 1971 without Coalition backing (he refused to endorse a radical plan for community control of the police). But even so, he owed his narrow victory to a strong vote in the radical, student strongholds, and as mayor, Widener voted with the April Coalition on many issues. The first, small steps were taken toward enacting a radical program. The Council abolished the practice of saluting the flag at its meetings (to the horror of nearby Albany, whose City Council voted to salute the flag twice at *its* meetings), stopped police harassment of the young people flooding Berkeley for the summer, ended restrictions on hair length for city employees, and

PHOTO BY DAVID FLORES

April Coalition candidates for Berkeley Council

began plans for an affirmative action hiring program that would open city jobs for minorities and women.

But the ninth Council seat, vacated by Widener's elevation to mayor, could be filled only by appointment—by a majority of the Council. Without the crucial ninth vote, the Council was unable to act on issues of substance. First among those issues was the passage of a city budget, normally due on July 1, the beginning of the fiscal year. The conservative-moderate bloc held out for a standard city budget, while the Coalition pressed for a radically different one—a comprehensive plan of greatly expanded social services, to be funded by increasing business taxes and slashing the Police Department budget.

As the summer wore on, the Council began meeting several times a week, in acrimonious sessions that sometimes lasted almost until dawn. The 4 to 4 tie seemed unbreakable, but Widener was under increasing pressure to act as a "responsible" mayor—after all, Berkeley had to have a budget. Eventually, Widener closeted himself with Wilmont Sweeney—the conservative black councilman he had narrowly defeated for mayor—and came up with a compromise budget. It partially funded some of the community clinics called for by the Coalition, provided token support for childcare, reduced the police budget somewhat, and cut off the yearly $23,000 city stipend to the Chamber of Commerce. The budget may have represented a first step toward reordering priorities, but the radicals felt that Widener had met the conservatives far more than halfway, and there were loud cries of betrayal.

Then, in December 1971, Widener met his "responsibility" as mayor once again, joining the conservative-moderate bloc to appoint Susan Hone —another moderate—to the ninth Council seat. Thereafter, although Widener repeatedly voted with the radicals, their four votes had become a minority.

The April Coalition now turned its attention once again to the community, seeking support for measures the City Council would not pass and looking ahead to 1973, when four members of the moderate-conservative bloc would be up for election. In June 1972 the radicals used the initiative process to enact a strong system of rent control, to be enforced by an elected board. In the November election, the radicals turned back an initiative that would have required run-off elections for City Council candidates not receiving a clear majority—and which would have been held during the week that students of the University were tied up in final examinations.

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[ELECTION SPECIAL]

The solid Berkeley majority delivered to George McGovern raised expectations that the April Coalition would come to power in the spring. Editorials in the conservative Berkeley Gazette began to take on a note of hysteria.

But the radicals were not the unified threat their opponents feared. On the Council, the three Coalition members sometimes clashed angrily on substantive issues. D'Army Bailey and Ira Simmons, who had joined with the Coalition as candidates of the autonomous Black Caucus, soon gave up trying to represent the student and radical communities which had elected them and moved into the black community, often taking what many white radicals viewed as narrow nationalist positions. "If this doesn't benefit the black community, I'm not voting for it," Bailey once remarked in voting against funds for a women's health clinic. Ilona Hancock, the third Coalition councilperson, repeatedly saw her motions die in the Council for lack of a second.

Meanwhile, as the Coalition prepared for the 1973 elections, its division into two wings became apparent. The "pragmatist" wing, including many radicals active in Berkeley electoral politics since 1966, wanted to focus on specific local issues. They formed groups around police problems, health care, housing and women's issues. A group loosely affiliated with the Coalition developed a plan to municipalize the local facilities of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

At the same time, a somewhat more ideological wing of the Coalition began demanding adherence to a "clear left" perspective. At a convention held last November, the leftist wing at first prevailed, adopting a platform meant to place the Coalition clearly in the ranks of world revolution. The leftist-dominated convention also nominated a slate of five candidates for the newly-established Rent Control Board, who were then defeated in the special January election by a unified liberal slate—supported by conservatives and moderates as "the only alternative." It was an ominous portent.

By February, the pragmatist wing had regained control and nominated three candidates for the City Council slate. Then, in a gesture of unity, it nominated the fourth candidate from the leftist wing. But the gesture did not prevent long and acrimonious debates over endorsements, literature and campaign tactics.

Amid all the political infighting, the Coalition campaign for City Council failed to find a clear focus, although many of the issues it raised were on the ballot as separate initiatives. The electorate could vote on four police-control measures, municipalization of utilities, decriminalization of marijuana, and a neighborhood preservation ordinance—designed to preserve old houses while blocking construction of high-rent, low-quality apartment buildings.

In contrast to the Coalition convention, where 1200 people met to nominate their Council candidates, a group of moderates met in the living room of City Councilman Ed Kallgren and selected their own slate—all self-proclaimed "liberal democrats," including two incumbants with relatively conservative voting records. "We share the aims of the April Coalition," they proclaimed in public statements and campaign literature, "but we can get it done." The thrust of their campaign was that they also wanted "progressive change," but that they were more responsible. The mayor, ending once and for all his alliance with the radical bloc, worked for election of the liberal "Berkeley Four" slate.

The conservatives were so fearful of a "radical takeover" that they were prepared to use all means necessary to prevent it—and that included supporting liberals. All Republicans but one withdrew from the Council race, guaranteeing a confrontation between two distinct slates, in which independent candidates had little chance. (They had learned the lesson of 1971: failure to unite would mean defeat at the hands of the radicals.)

When the votes were counted, three of the "liberal" candidates had won with a margin of about 2000 votes over the radical slate. Ying Lee Kelley, an Asian antiwar activist from the Coalition, was elected to the fourth seat. At the same time, four of the radical ballot initiatives won—two police control measures, marijuana decriminalization, and neighborhood preservation. Three other initiatives failed—including the municipalization of Pacific Gas and Electric.

Billboard for "Berkeley 4"

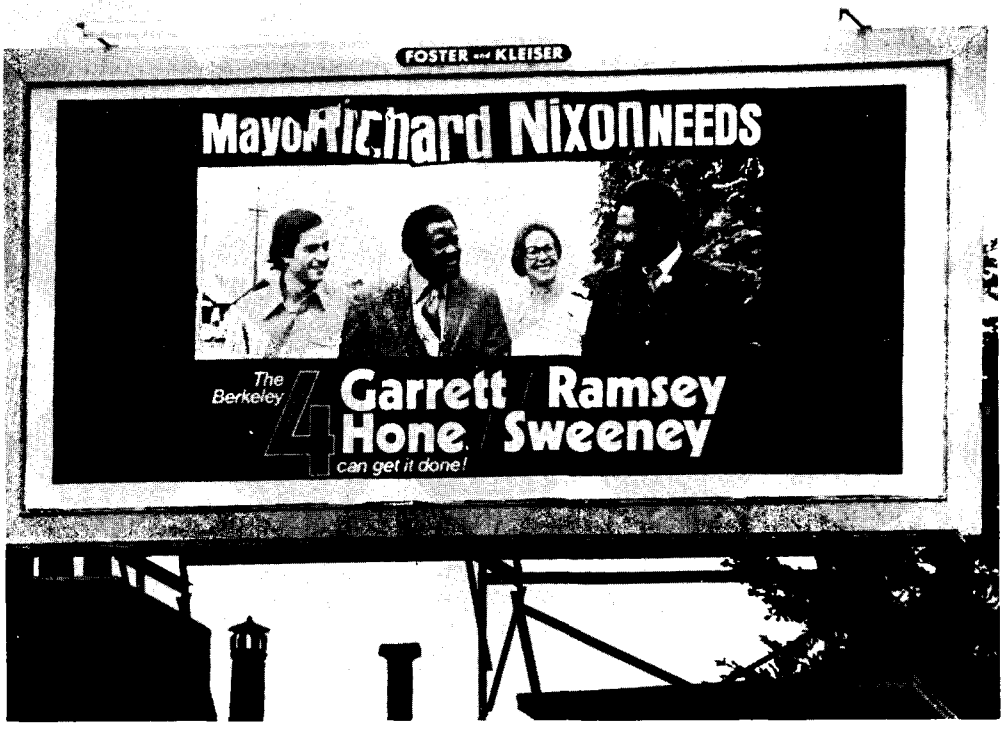

PHOTO BY BOB FITCH

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Interpretations of the Coalition's setback reflect pre-election divisions in the radical community. The left wing of the Coalition claims that the campaign was not radical enough to rouse the students from their post-McGovern apathy, or to distinguish the radical slate from its liberal opponents. The student turnout of 60 percent was lower than in 1971, but about the average turnout for the city as a whole this year. It was, moreover, offset by an 80 percent turnout in the wealthy Berkeley Hills, where voters went solidly for the Berkeley Four.

The pragmatist wing agrees that the lower student vote was very damaging, but sees it as part of a broader organizational problem. Factional fights within the Coalition persisted for so long that serious campaigning did not begin until a few weeks before the election. It was not enough time to acquaint people with the issues that distinguished the April Coalition from the liberals—who had four times as much money to spend as did the radicals. In the radical strongholds around the University, some Coalition organizers tended to take the student vote for granted, assuming that the very existence of a radical slate would guarantee their support. The student precincts were not canvassed as thoroughly as they had been in 1971, when the student turnout had exceeded 75 percent.

The election results were a disappointment for the April Coalition, but the voting patterns they reflect hold promise for the future. Facing the combined strength of liberals, moderates and conservatives, the Coalition was less than 3000 votes short of complete victory—this with a smaller turnout than in 1971. The radical candidates received more votes than before in almost every area of the city, while some of the ballot initiatives they sponsored outpolled any single candidate.

The radical vote is clearly the largest single bloc in Berkeley. If the liberal-to-conservative alliance ever begins to crack, or if the April Coalition is able to mount a united campaign that clearly identifies attractive candidates with important community issues, the radicals could very well take control of Berkeley in the next city elections. ■

ENVIRONMENT AN ISSUE AS LEFT COALITION WINS IN SANTA BARBARA

by Richard Parker

[ELECTION SPECIAL]

While the radical Council slate was going down to defeat in Berkeley, Santa Barbara—300 miles to the south—was electing the radical-liberal Citizens' Coalition to power on its City Council. The campaign had enlisted community support behind an environmental banner broad enough to raise basic questions about the quality of life in the 1970s. And in the first regular Council meeting after the election, the new majority began fulfilling its promises. The Council placed a defacto moratorium on new building in the city, ordered a temporary down-zoning of property to block construction of large-scale apartment houses, and warned Southern Pacific that it would face rough going

Richard Parker has served as a Junior Fellow at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, and as an intern economist at the United Nations. He is currently an editor of the Santa Barbara News and Review.

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in its plans to develop a $15 million hotel-convention center complex along the city's beachfront.

The tough new mood among voters came as a surprise in the traditionally Republican town. Over the past decade, the Santa Barbara area has been growing apace with much of the rest of Southern California, increasing its population by 60 percent since 1960. As in most towns its size—population 70,000—Santa Barbara's politics have been dominated by downtown business and real estate interests. Although the infamous 1969 oil spill focused local and national attention on environmental problems, city fathers were able to keep up a steady growth rate and business went on much as usual.

Yet Santa Barbara was not isolated from the changing social and political currents of the '60s. The University of California campus a few miles to the north brought a liberal element to the community. And while militant student demonstrations—culminating in the 1970 burning of a Bank of America branch in Isla Vista—may have shocked the majority of Santa Barbara residents, they opened up the city's political dialogue as never before.

In 1969 the first distinctly liberal candidate was elected to the City Council. At the same time, graduates of the student movement were settling down in Santa Barbara. They contributed to the development of a law collective, an open medical clinic, and the Community Union—an umbrella organization which coordinated anti-war work, support for the farmworkers, and other such politics. At first the radical element did not venture into electoral politics. But in December 1972 radicals and liberals joined to form the Citizens' Coalition, which was to appeal to the electorate for a new direction in city government.

Organizers of the Citizens' Coalition credit their electoral victory to growing voter awareness that their interests were being subordinated to those of business. As Coalition Chairman Stephen White put it, "People began realizing that economics was being put before environment." Although the environmental issue has until recently been most popular among the white upper-middle class, the April voting results in Santa Barbara suggest its potential for a much broader appeal. In fact, strongest support for Coalition candidates came from working-class and Chicano neighborhoods; upper-middle-class areas tended to favor more conservative candidates.

Part of the seeming appeal of "environment" for workers and minorities may be the novel way it generated issues in the campaign. To workers, environment meant "environmental protection" from overcrowding neighborhoods where they were buying their small homes; to the poor, it became the promise of more goods and services—expressed as "improving the quality of life." And the discussion of campaign issues opened the way for an even more radical understanding of environment. For example, talking about the housing situation in Santa Barbara raised the question of how the private economy was unable to meet the need for low-income housing, while regularly overbuilding in the upper-income bracket. Or talking carefully about employment to be opened up by the Southern Pacific hotel-convention center permitted discussion of the *kind* of employment projected—predominantly jobs for maids and waiters at $2 an hour.

Although the Coalition's successes—both electoral and educational—are impressive, few observers are prepared to say that power has changed hands in Santa Barbara. Coalitions are usually unstable, and the Citizens' Coalition is no exception. Its slate for City Council attempted to balance a wide range of political and social beliefs. At one end of the spectrum was Leo Martinez, a progressive young Chicano community leader who is also an officer in one of the local building-trades unions, yet also favors some form of controlled growth. At the other end was Alice Rypins, a white woman in her late '60s with a more traditional understanding of environment. Asked during the campaign how she had voted last November on state Proposition 22—a measure designed to destroy the farmworkers movement—Rypins said she "couldn't remember," Significantly, she almost lost her race to a more radical doctor who had not been endorsed by the Citizens' Coalition.

Santa Barbara's conservative business interests will certainly be looking ahead to the next election. This April, money played a crucial role in an election overcrowded by 39 candidates for five seats. The five candidates who won—four Coalition members, plus the mayoral candidate, David Schiffman, who ran independently—were the top spenders in their races. The business community is unlikely to miss the correlation. The Coalition spent only $6000 on the campaign, with 85 percent of its funds coming from donations of $100 or less. Real estate sales alone run over $100 million a year in the area, and the Citizens' Coalition position does not sit well with those who benefit from those sales or from other growth-oriented business. As the new Council pushes harder for a new set of priorities, an alternative "coalition" may emerge with a great deal more than $6000 to spend on the next campaign, two years away.

But voters for the time being are not listening to traditional voices. The town's Republican newspaper—which has a virtual monopoly on news—refused to endorse the Coalition, choosing instead to back virtual unknowns. But the Coalition forged ahead anyway. Even the town's new mayor, a business management consultant who won on a sophisticated media campaign, avoided clashing with the Coalition on issues, stressing instead homilies like "the need for strong leadership." And at the first Council meeting, he surprisingly voted down the line with the Coalition majority.

As with most things political in America today, no one can say where the Coalition will end up. Nudged one way, it might fall back into an elitist "Greening of America" consciousness that chooses trees and clean streets over answers to the social and political inequalities that still plague us. Pushed another way, it may come to represent an entirely new progressive force in the small and medium-sized towns of America—an alternative to the vanguard consciousness of university-influenced cities. But whatever happens the next time around in Santa Barbara, the people reached by the Coalition campaign this year are likely to remember the questions it raised and the answers it offered. ■

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JUNE 1973

Saturday Review

ONE DOLLAR

BANKRUPTCY

One into Four Won't Go

The Rise and Fall of Nick Charney's Saturday Review

DON BATTERSHALL

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SR UP FRONT

JUNE 1973

Psychology Today tomorrow the ..er.. World

BY JON SWAN

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.—There was a sense of unreality about the whole shebang from the start. Hardly surprising, perhaps, considering that two potent hallucinogenic agents, Nicolas Charney and John Veronis, of *Psychology Today* fame and (after selling it off for millions) fortune, were in charge of the operation. Speaking a lingo that mingled McLuhanese with standard entrepreneurial jabberwocky and which conjured up visions of a newfangled West Coast Time, Inc., Blarney and Zeronis induced a marvelous high among their fans on the fattened staff of their new *Saturday Review*—and, apparently, among the investors who provided them with a total of $17 million, too. The move from New York, a critical city, to San Francisco, pretty but dumb, added to the delusional air surrounding the enterprise. Many Easterners, plunked down in Northern California, suddenly felt like exiles in their native land—street names sounded funny, the names of local celebrities rang no bell, the vegetation was exotic, the birds weren't the same, the sun shone, wine was cheap, dope was abundant and very good. True, reality did threaten to intrude on Sybaris-West. No sooner had the exiles settled down in this novel ecological niche in which newspapers contain next to no news and bookstores thrive by stocking non-books, than the word was out that some $5 million were needed to keep *SR* alive and ailing in San Francisco. But, lo, the millions arrived, enabling Blarney and Zeronis to go ahead with a scheme that called for converting one wobbly weekly into four nimble and prodigiously profitable (given time—i.e., more millions) monthlies.

Madcap? Well, no, not exactly, but certainly risky—perhaps even foolhardy, considering that, so far, very little had gone according to plan (Norman Cousins, *SR*'s longtime editor who had gradually built its circulation up to 630,000, was *not* supposed to walk off in a huff to found a biweekly *World* of his own; the renovation of *SR*'s San Francisco home was supposed to be completed in July, not December; etc.) and the Blarnozeronian scheme called for all systems working without a hitch. Meanwhile, the race to meet the demands of the company's most pressing creditors gave an edge of panic to the manic-depressive office atmosphere. Shortly after April Fool's Day, 1973, the shebang began to shudder in earnest. Screws loosened. People began to see visions—of themselves in exalted positions on the cut-back staff of a mythical monthly, or of themselves as jobless and stranded 3000 miles from home.

On April 24 (16 months after Cousins broke with Charney and Veronis; eight months after an uprooted 60 or so employees, many with families in tow, arrived, blinking, at San Francisco Airport; and just two days before *SR* was to have held open house in its posh, leased, four-story headquarters at the foot of Telegraph Hill) *SR* filed for reorganization under Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy law, and a press release was handed out that was headlined: SR Suspends Publication, Cousins to Head New Venture. With lunatic logic the venture had come full circle.

Herewith, a personal, incomplete, strongly biased narrative—divided, appropriately, into 11 cunningly reorganized chapters—of the final frenzy, as well as of a few of the shuffling or vaulting steps that preceded it.

CHAPTER VIII

(In which Nick Charney explains the difference between "the new magazine and the old," and instructs his audience on how to captivate readers.)

It was in the first week of February 1973 that Chairman, Editor-in-Chief, and just plain Editor Nick Charney (to get his full array of titles out of the way) assembled about 50 people, members of the editorial and production staffs of the four magazines—*SR of Education*, of *The Arts, Society*, and *Science*—for a slide show he'd long wanted to get around to giving but hadn't been able to find time for. The point of the meeting, Chairman Charney began, was to explain the difference between old magazines, kept alive by a dying-off breed of subscribers, and the new. What made new magazines new? Well, their use, their exploitation of the nonlinear mode. So what was the nonlinear mode? Everything that wasn't linear. So what did "linear" mean? Lines of type. Words. So a grasp of the importance of the nonlinear mode meant exciting graphics, for one thing.

Meanwhile, the exciting graphics that had been prepared for Nick's show had just arrived. They had arrived scrambled and were being unscrambled. At last the first slide appeared on the screen. The lecture was formally launched.

Which were the new magazines? Nick clicked the slide switcher. Pictures of magazine covers, of representative pages from various magazines, flashed on the screen. Nick's pick: *New York, Psychology Today* (his brainchild), *Intellectual Digest* (ditto), *Clear Creek* (which had recently folded), *West* (ditto), *Ms.* Which were the old? *The New Yorker* ("Having a hard time. I give it about four or five years."), *Harper's* ("Just breaking even. Trying to change over to nonlinear mode. New wraparound's interesting. Confusing, but a step in the right . . ."), *Atlantic* ("Just breaking even"), *World.* Nick clicked the switcher. Up popped a cover of *Newsweek.* Picture of a huge light bulb. Slash headline: THE ENERGY CRISIS. Nick glanced up at it. Effective cover. "Oh, is this where this belongs?" Voice from the projection room: "Yeah, Nick." Never at a loss for words, Nick went on to explain why *Newsweek* was an oldie.

Where, then, did the four *Saturday*

Jon Swan is a poet, playwright, and translator who leaped aboard the Saturday Review *as a senior editor to pay off his creditors, and found that bigshots can go bankrupt, too.*

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Reviews belong? They were on their way to becoming new, Nick said, but one big fat linear foot was still stuck in the past. His job, our job, was to see that all four got nonlinear fast.

Was exciting graphics all it took? By no means. There was a lot more to the non-linear mode than that. What then? Slides and talk hammered and tonged the answer home: jazzy type faces for headlines, for "sells"; "pacing and rhythm," the way a magazine *moves*; "service-oriented" articles, articles that involve the reader, get him to sound off, write off, write in, *connect*. There followed a brief explanation of the 100-second flippership test. New subscribers, coaxed into laying out cash for a trial subscription, supposedly put every magazine to this crucial test. They flipped through the pages and if everything but the prose itself intrigued them they might actually go through the agony and the ecstasy of reading the printed word. The printed word, in whose name so many editors had been brought West (why?), was made to sound like the last resort of a literate scoundrel.

CHAPTER I

(*In which Skipper Nick explains to all hands the unsinkable structure of the good ship* SR.)

Norman Cousins had left in December 1971, taking with him a handful of loyalists and the pictures of Canby, Morley & Co. that had lined the halls for decades. By now it was—when? January 1972, as I recall. Nick called a mass meeting to explain corporate structure, clarify publishing objectives, and all hands, old and new, drifted into the biggest room in *SR*'s Madison Ave. office until people were wedged together, locked into place like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle; outside, the corridor started filling up with tiers of faces. I—who had slipped into *SR* in November by a back door when neither Charney nor Cousins was looking—had not known there were so many. It was a motley crew. The middle-aged holdovers, dressed in traditional Eastern office wear, glowered or smiled tentatively at the recently hired-on lot, who were dressed in flashier costumes or wore work shirts, blue jeans. Nick was hiring brains, or talent, or people who simply seemed with it, by the carload. Most were dropped into think tanks on a nether floor, from which a few would subsequently crawl away, bored and bedraggled; a few would surface with pearls of thought; a few would break water, spouting the new rhetoric like whales. These last would have their reward.

Nick, standing by a desk cluttered with charts, looked very young and invulnerable and square: horn-rimmed glasses, white shirt, tie, plaid sports jacket, slacks, loafers. He was so openly smug it was almost disarming. He had a cold. He talked for two hours in a rather high, even-toned, somewhat rasping voice, and drank 14 glasses of water.

"Motivation involves giving people a chance to grow, giving people a chance to develop and do what they want to do, to express themselves and to get credit for it, and not to have things rammed down their throats."

Nick Charney
Saturday Review

SR was financially secured in so many ways it wasn't funny, we learned. It was, in essence, the *Titanic* of the magazine world. What made it unsinkable? Well, to begin with it was only a comparatively small part of the publishing empire he and John and the other investors had recently acquired, and all around it there were these various watertight compartments: Saturday Review Press, Saturday Review Book Club, Saturday Review Programs, Saturday Review Syndicate—moneymakers all. "At Saturday Review Industries," he went on, "other divisions can both create new products out of editorial inventory and sell additional products to subscribers." Additional products? Such things as records, posters, luggage, Smithfield hams, fruitcake, you name it.

The Brooklyn Bridge.

SUBSECTION 1 TO CHAPTER XI

(*Being a report from a still-bobbing survivor of what caused the ship to founder*:)

1. Cousins's leaving spooked advertisers. Subsequent announcements of all sorts of changes further spooked them. Adopting a wait-and-see policy, they waited, they saw. The result: a persistent "advertising shortfall." Each monthly, to pay its own way, had to bring in roughly $135,000 in advertising per issue, $35,000 of which was regularly supplied by classified ads. This left $100,000. None of the magazines quite made this mark, with *Education* lagging far behind at between $50,000 and $60,000.
2. Hotshot Blarnozeronian talk at the start (Zeronis: "We don't consider the reader as a $12-a-year subscriber to a magazine, but as a potential $100-a-year customer") spooked the press. Reporters, who had a hard time figuring out what was going on, tended to serve up garbled information with a dollop of snide sauce.
3. The failure of two big mailings to attract subscribers resulted in a tremendous cash loss. In August 1972 a nine-million-piece mailing went out, which cost $1.4 million. Business plan called for two percent return in subscriptions—the norm. Result of August mailing: "about one percent return." In the last week of December a 17-million-piece mailing went out (which cost close to $3 million), got stuck in post offices in the Christmas rush. Result once again: "about one percent return." (Something wrong with those mailings? According to one knowledgeable source: "The mailings were slick but didn't relate to the magazines. There was never time to test the mailings thoroughly and develop presentation material that really represented the magazines.") About a month before *SR* filed for reorganization under Chapter 11, it stopped guaranteeing advertisers a high of 750,000 for *SR of the Sciences*, a low of 600,000 for *SR of the Society*, began guaranteeing only 525,000 for each of the four.

Question: Was it the quality of the magazines themselves that caused guaranteed circulation to drop?

Answer: Moot point. Renewals on subscriptions were due to start coming in in June. The shebang folded before readers could vote on this issue.

Question: What did you personally think of the four magazines?

Answer: With few exceptions I read only the articles I edited—many of which were very good. A few—Edward Hoagland writing on wolves, Roy Bongartz on the British Wildlife Recording Society, Tony Hiss on Oscar Ichazo—were first-rate.

Question: Well, then, what did other editors, who read more widely, think of the magazines?

Answer: All managing editors were, I believe, proud of their magazines. Often just proud that under a variety of rough circumstances they had been able to bring out a magazine at all. Example of circumstance: William Honan, managing editor of *The Society*, has a cover

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story, on home security, all ready to run. A week before it's scheduled to go to press, the Veronis brothers fly out from New York, say: "If you hold that cover for a couple of months we can sell $50,000 of advertising to home-security-oriented industries." Honan, knowing how shaky things are, obligingly pulls the story, plugs the hole as best he can in the little time left. Two months pass. The held-up cover story goes to press. The Veronii fail to bring in any home-security-oriented ads. Example: three-, four-, five-hour-long conferences with Charney talking nonstop to entire staffs of this or that magazine. Meanwhile, work to be done gets undone; supposedly inspired troops emerge dazed.

Question: And nonmanaging editors—what did they think of the magazines?

Answer: I just spoke to five editors. Their praise was faint. Only one had consistently read a major portion of all magazines. "I had to force myself to read them," he said. "Most of the stories just weren't interesting. No point, and no urgency. They could have been run any time." All five agreed on one point: As special-interest magazines the four magazines were awfully general.

Question: One last, personal question. The shebang aside, were you glad to have had this opportunity to visit California?

Answer: Delighted.

CHAPTER II

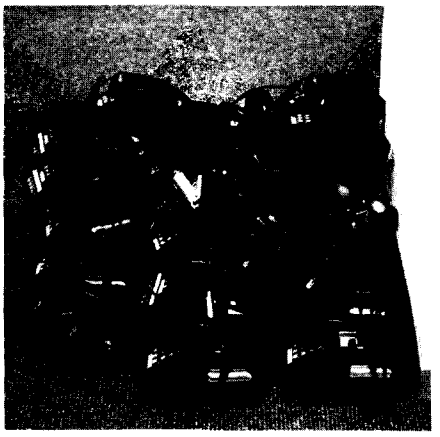
Spring of '72. Those white patches on the walls where Cousins's pictures had hung bothered Nick. As did the down-at-heels look of the New York office in general. So walls and offices were painted, new carpets laid, partitions put up—the works. Nifty, but not really necessary, since Nick had already decided that the whole shebang must go west—and soon. Why move? To escape the myopia from which New York-based magazines supposedly suffered. To clear out of a grimy, problem-ridden corner of the country and pitch camp on sun-soaked, solution-oriented terrain. To . . . oh, basically, to allow Nick to operate and relax in an atmosphere he felt at home in. New York and New Yorkers got on his nerves. "Everybody I meet around here reads *The New York Times*, and I just don't know what they're talking about."

The decision to renovate so soon before leaving the premises to a skeleton staff struck some as evidence of a fat exchequer, others as a sign that Nick and John felt that *SR* had to look rich even if—especially when—it was running short of cash.

Some months later such spendthrift practices were to seem just this side of criminal.

CHAPTER III

Excerpt from form letter received in



July or early August 1972 by all remaining members of cut-down motley crew who were planning to go to San Francisco:

WELCOME:

YOU WHO ARE ABOUT TO EMBARK ON THE GREAT ADVENTURE WESTWARD WILL BE MOVING WITH NORTH AMERICAN VAN LINES, THE VERY BEST IN THE BUSINESS OF TRANSPORTING HOUSEHOLD GOODS, AND WE ARE DELIGHTED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE IT.... THE STEPS DESCRIBED ARE THE METHODS BY WHICH WE WILL GET YOU FROM THE NEW YORK AREA TO SAN FRANCISCO. IT WILL REQUIRE APPROXIMATELY 7 TO 10 DAYS TRAVEL TIME TO GET THE VAN HERE TO THERE.

SO RELAX—WE WILL MAKE THIS YOUR HAPPIEST MOVE.

SUBSECTION 2 FROM CHAPTER XI

Excerpt from form letter sent by North American Van Lines, which some 20 SR employees received on May 4, 1973—for most of them, the last day of their employment:

Dear Mr.

North American moved your household goods in interstate commerce from New York to California. The freight charges on that shipment still outstanding are $ ———— Your employer, Saturday Review Magazine, agreed to make full payment for these charges.

To date, no payment has been received from your employer. . . . In performance of our duty as an interstate carrier, we must now . . . collect this amount from you. . . . I fully realize this burden may come to you unexpectedly and may impose some degree of hardship. For this we at North American are truly sorry. . . . We did, however, attempt to prepare you for this risk by placing on the back of the bill of lading which you signed. . . .

CHAPTER IV

(*Being a brief ode on the occasion of a flight from New York to San Francisco, August 20, 1972*:)

California, here I—
with wife and three children,
plus a dog numb
with dread and sedation—
come,
courtesy of *Saturday Review.*
For reasons that appear
to have something to do
with sunnier outlook in sunny location
—a nice bit of optimystification—
the whole shebang's going west,
like the ghost
(the ghost of literature,
Leslie Fiedler might say)
and today
(hooray?)
it's our turn to fly.

Evicted from our house on a Connecticut hilltop as of August 23 (the California landlord's stated complaint: too many kids), and with no other job on the Eastern horizon, flight seemed prudent. It wasn't, of course. But then what if everything had turned out differently—if Charney's dream magazines had had time (i.e., more millions) to catch on? Hindsight is a warped lens.

CHAPTER V

(*Being a short digression on Charney in hindsight*:)

Charney was never what I would call a breath of fresh air. But he was an energetic windbag. A breezy guy, a true son of Aeolus. He could listen to himself talk for hours without being bored for a minute. (He left that part of living to others.)

Many *SR* editors who were by no means his fans considered Nick not just bright but brilliant. His penchant for talking Blarnozeronian obscured that insight from me. One thing: He was almost invariably in high spirits. He appeared in the office in Mad Hatter costume one day. In the San Francisco office, of course.

For a man with a Ph.D. in psychology, he was remarkably insensitive. Or rather, he was aware of others' moods but didn't give much of a damn about them, and clanked right on. Was he more than insensitive—was he cruel? In hindsight, true, it could seem cruel that he should uproot and transport so many people so far when he knew that keeping *SR* going, and growing, was going to be a tricky business. (At a meeting with employees held two days after *SR* filed Chapter 11, Fred Wyle, chairman of the executive committee, let slip the startling fact that some four months before the transcontinental move, in March 1972, "there was talk even then of pulling the plug." But then could any rational adult really expect an entrepreneur like Nick to worry about what might happen to people in the unlikely event that the successful enterprise he projected—lived by projecting—should flop? Hardly.

According to people who talked with him more often and freely than I did,

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Nick considers himself a liberal Democrat. According to novelist Herbert Gold, shortly after *SR* filed Chapter 11 Nick put his $15,000 Maserati up for sale for $4,000. Nick reputedly sank and lost around $750,000 in *SR*. This is roughly the amount it cost to move everybody and everything west. He is, I am told, an admirer of Walt Disney, his life and entrepreneurial savvy. He has, I have heard, often toyed with the idea of branching out into the theme-park game. His Bible? Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock*. Chief guru? Economist Peter Drucker, author of *The Age of Discontinuity*, supposedly high on the White House's recommended-reading list before Watergate zapped contact there with the linear mode.

I toss out these facts and possible fictions like yarrow sticks, but lack an *I Ching* to interpret them with. Or the requisite patience born of fascination to sit down with Nick for five hours at his ranch at Bolinas or his house at Del Mar or his suite, if he still has one, at the Pierre, or his S.F. apartment just off the crookedest street in the world, in an attempt to discover what Nick thinks makes him tick, and whither the next tock will take him.

He reminded me of a precocious college junior who loves to hold court among freshmen. There was, to begin with, the remorseless self-indulgence of his monologues—in which "now" was invariably enflatulated to "at this point in time," and into which every magpie fact or vaguely relevant reminiscence was dragged as if it were gold ("Last night I was having a drink with my wife," to quote a revelation offered to the *Society* staff, "and I turned to her and I said, 'Ann, when I think of all the worries and trouble connected with the job, sometimes I wonder whether I really want to go on being an entrepreneur.' ") Then there was his *SR* fan club—boyish men, young goodlooking women, bright kids flattered to have a corner on the boss. At the office they served as benevolent bugs, reporting to Nick every scrap of gossip or information that might interest him. On weekends they flew off with Nick to his house in Del Mar ("One of the most unusual and spectacular homes in San Diego County," according to the For Sale ad that appeared weekly in *SR*). They were having the time of their lives. In the final delusional week when the single mythical monthly that would replace the four about-to-be scuttled magazines was being secretly planned, fans were assured that they would be among the elite left clinging to the new masthead. They were fit to be tied when they found out that their pal had deceived them.

He was, to use his own jargon, an "opportunity-oriented" fellow to the very end.

SUBSECTION 3 TO CHAPTER XI

Cousins had the careful manners of a professional gentleman. (Charney's were as sloppy as cowflop—"Oh, well, I might as well kiss you, too, since we're all going to have to get to know each other," being his farewell speech to a managing editor's wife at the close of a party at the Charney ranch in Bolinas.) But Cousins's *SR* was, by and large, a slipshod Grub Street publication. So far as I know, only one editor, Rochelle Girson of the book review section, ever edited copy; in general, the policy was "hands off the prose," which would have been wise had the prose been good.

There was a weary, cranky atmosphere about the shop Cousins ran. One kept tripping over wires of conflict, running afoul of ancient feuds. The staff had been kept on short fiscal rations so long and had clopped the same cobblestones for so many years that a good half of them looked ready to drop in their traces. One longed for . . . oh, for a start, anyway, a breath of fresh air. In lieu of which in blew Nick Charney. At least he banished the mildew, stirred up the dust, got things moving at a clip that made people gasp. (Has not this restless Satan saved thee, Cousins?)

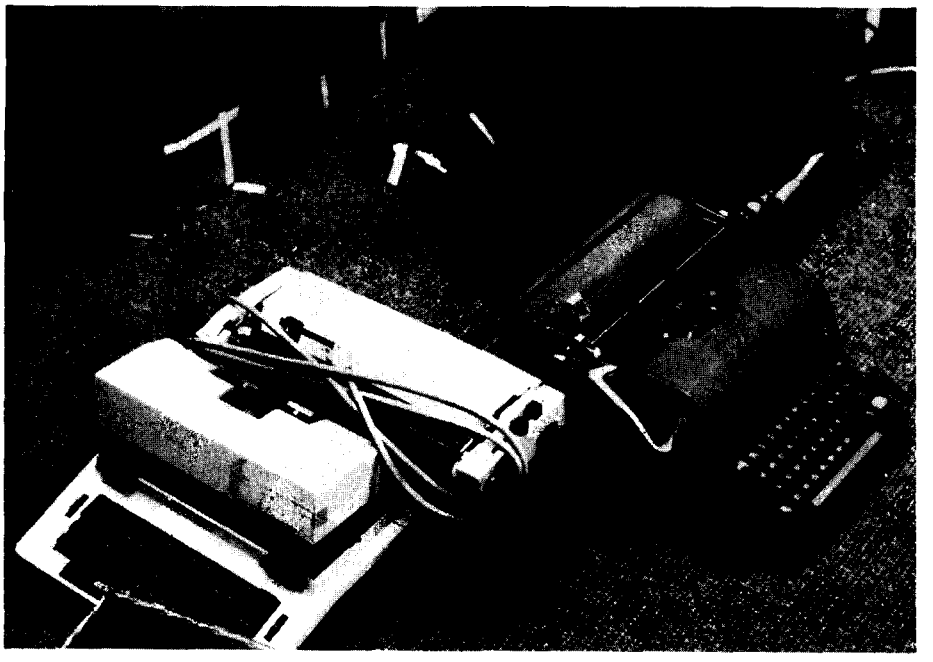
CHAPTER VII

For about four months—July-October 1972—I had about as much fun as an office-hater can have working in an office. Rob Cowley, who had been managing editor of *Horizon*, joined *SR* in June as managing editor of the weekly portion of the magazine. Very bright, and delighted to be doing something new—namely, or mainly, putting together a freewheeling section called Up Front, which consisted of short, timely articles of general interest—Rob was eager to make the section as sharp and memorable as *The New Republic* had been when his father, Malcolm Cowley, was in charge of that magazine. Unabashedly fond of the linear mode, he went after the best prose he could get. He enjoyed being able to give young writers such as Mary Breasted and Lucian Truscott, whose articles appeared mainly in *The Village Voice*, a chance to report and sound off in a national magazine. If their prose and/or stance jolted readers, well, why shouldn't readers be grateful? "Damn braces. Bless relaxes." I liked Rob's attitude. The Veronis brothers, John and Peter, who were in charge of advertising, didn't. Nick left reading to others that summer, just as during the winter he had left to others the writing of editorials that bore his name. Ronald P. Kriss, the executive editor whom Nick and John had induced to leave *Time* back in January, was too preoccupied with trying to establish order in the midst of horrific chaos to read everything that appeared in each issue. (He was to remain preoccupied with trying to cope with chaos to the bitter end. Bemused by the incessant Blarnozeronian drone, he was also to become increasingly silent, a hired king drowned out by the jester who ran the palace and wore three crowns for the hell of it.)

Shortly before the move west, Charles McLaughlin, a bouyant veteran of the sinking of *Look* and an editor who possessed a calm sanity that Up Front could use, joined the section. The three of us closed ranks and in an unspoken agreement decided to give the rascals who ruled *SR* a run for their money.

The fun lasted until in September, by which time the move had been made, the money ran out, with a gurgle that gave househunting Easterners pause.

(*Continued on page 59*)



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MYSTIC POLITICS
Refugees from the New Left

To communicate with Mars, converse with spirits
To report the behaviour of the sea monster,
Describe the horoscope, haruspicate or scry,
Observe disease in signatures, evoke
Biography from the wrinkles of the palm
And tragedy from fingers; release omens
By sortilege, or tea leaves, riddle the inevitable
With playing cards, fiddle with pentagrams
Or barbituric acids, or dissect
The recurrent image into pre-conscious terrors–
To explore the womb, or tomb, or dreams; all these are usual
Pastimes and drugs, and features of the press:
And always will be, some of them especially
When there is distress of nations and perplexity
Whether on the shores of Asia, or in the Edgware Road. . . .
–T. S. Eliot
The Dry Salvages

"Everybody in our house is here, but we're marching under the banner of Crunchy Granola and Vitamin E."
–Fragment of a conversation overheard at an anti-Inaugural demonstration, Chicago, 1973

The topography of American political culture in this strangely suspended season is strewn with the skeletons of abandoned movements, lowered visions, dying dreams. No truces but tacit cease-fires have stilled the war on poverty, the war of the classes, the war of the worlds. In the white and middle-class field of action, at least, explicitly political energy and imagination are in short supply. Ideologies based on mechanistic analyses of power and history may not be wrong, but they are seen to be external to the lives of many whom they once moved, and irrelevant, too, to long-untended needs for peace of body, soul or mind.

But anyone who looks around can see the force behind the spiritual, religious and existential cults that have developed in the spaces where political organizations are usually found. Gurus, swamis, roshis, dervishes, gods and therapists are building impressive movements and extensive institutions while the traditional left sects contract in size and influence. Rennie Davis, once the New Leftist *par excellence,* has become a devoted organizer for the aggressive religion of the Satguru Maharaj Ji, the teenage Avatar (that is, God). Davis draws enormous crowds of both the curious and the faithful, at a time when it's hard to summon a *minyan* for a political demonstration. Although stars of Davis's magnitude have not, as yet, appeared in other cosmic constellations, it is apparent at once from a browse through any bookstore, a stroll through a college campus, or a glance through an underground newspaper that mystic chic has replaced radical fashions on the trend charts this year.

It is easy for an unreconstructed radical to dismiss the New Mysticism as bourgeois escapism, mass-psychological deviation, or an inevitable (and insignificant) historical retreat before the next revolutionary offensive. Perhaps it is all of that, the varying interpretations implying only the various perceptions and ideologies. But it is more, too: there is a spirit which connects the political movements of the last decade with the spiritual movements of this one, and a style as well. Although a community of yogis and a collective of radicals may see their lives and their work as vastly different in content and purpose, in the current American context they appear driven by many of the same incessant impulses, haunted by the familiar fears, baffled by the old perplexities. Class, race and sex; bureaucracy and authority; love and distance; alienation and integration; rationalism and spontaneity: the energies which create and destroy social movements act on the cosmic ones as well. It's more than coincidence (and even more than economics) that lures foreign mystics and masters to America in these last/first days of an imperial era. The spreading decay nurtures a full garden of revolutionary and mystical blooms, and they grow together from the same rich and rotting soil. And it is neither wise, nor useful, to call them flowers of evil or of good.

I've been trying to make sense of the phenomenon of politics-into-mysticism, which this spring seems to have exploded into some new level of social importance. I don't mean to exaggerate the prevalence of the syndrome, nor romanticize the starring personalities, nor mystify the mystique. After all, most of us have dabbled in this or that Eastern philosophy, tripped out on drugs, or encountered some transcendental psycho-cosmic therapy over the course of the last few years. Some people have been quietly doing "spiritual work" in a room, an ashram, a zendo or a mountainside. Moreover, there is an honorable tradition of Western intellectuals–Huxley, Isherwood and Eliot, for three examples–incorporating certain Oriental and mystical elements into their world-view.

But for some reason that is all comprehensible, if sometimes peculiar. Private head trips seemed to be adjuncts or companions of social movements, rather than replacements or alternatives. They were encouraged for a sense of philosophical "balance," and tolerated as "experiments" in self-understanding. But now, what was only a tendency has reached a stage of critical mass, a spiritual movement with a material and manpower base, concerned with cosmic consciousness and personal enlightenment, whether divinely or circumstantially inspired. And in some ways, in certain areas, it supersedes the politics of the '60s.

Andrew Kopkind is a free-lance journalist now living in Boston.

by Andrew Kopkind

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[THE SPIRITUALISM OF THE NEW LEFT]

The *Zeitgeist* of the political generation of SNCC, SDS and Weatherman—the "student" radical movements—always had its existential and spiritual side beneath the hard edge of political action. I'm thinking of Bob Moses disappearing from SNCC when he felt his ego attaching itself to the organization and its policies; of SDS turning on with dope and rock in the "Sergeant Pepper" summer of 1967; of the Liberation News Service spinning off a magical mystery commune in the Massachusetts woods from its Manhattan Marxist center; of women and homosexuals leaving "anti-imperialist" politics for what was condemned then as "the politics of personal liberation." Seen from the radical perspective, there was an anti-political contradiction to every political style, a non-rationalist counterpoint to every reasoned position.

But from another vantage point—the apolitical, spiritual perspective of good vibrations—transcendent consciousness, not social upheaval, was the basis of the times that were changing. Politics was simply (or perhaps not so simply) an old-fashioned obstacle in the way of universal enlightenment. It surprised me to hear young communards in Vermont name "politics" as the source of their oppression, in conversations among older radicals who were discussing oppressive racism, sexism, corporatism, or whatever. Acid, yoga, touchy-feelie, flower-power and bucolic communalism were base substances of the generational revolt. For people in that frame of mind, Marxism, Marcuse and Mao got in the way of the development of a passionate, non-rational, transcendental sensibility.

Historically, those two perspectives existed in more or less the same space: that is, in the institutional, psychological and existential lives of young white people in America. Acid freaks in the East Village and Weatherpeople in Chicago were in most ways different—and yet they were in the same "space" in the culture. A balance was struck so that the political and the personal, the external and the internal, the organizational and the existential forces did not seriously encroach on each other, either in the population or in any one individual. For those two perspectives happened within each one of us as well as within the generational community. A political organizer, for example, could go off for a month tripping by the sea and it would be cool; or a student strike leader might join a lamasary in the mountains and the balance would not tip.

But the historical redefinition of the '60s generation and the student movement now has drastically altered the relationships within the culture, distorted the elements of that "space." *Institutionally,* there are few ongoing political organizations in the left, and those that remain keep limiting their appeal by hardening their lines and stiffening their demands. The Communist Party, the Trotskyist sects, the Revolutionary Union, the Labor Committees and Progressive Labor gave up long ago on white middle class youth. The temporary anti-war coalitions have no significant lives beyond this or that demonstration. As a matter of fact, it is impossible for most people to express their ideas politically in an organization that takes them seriously.

Psychologically, the political perspective has become alienating and unsettling as support drains and the circumstances of the "real world" seem to change only for the worse. My impression is that many people who once found the universe of political action and ideology meaningful and enlivening, now find it empty and boring—and on top of that, they feel guilty for being bored.

Finally, in *existential* terms, it is particularly difficult nowadays to lead an integrated, authentic, sense-making life in a political way; that is, to live out in everyday terms those social values which are inherent in the political perspective. The projects, collectives, newspapers, offices of the political movements are mostly gone or transformed, and there are few ways to find support—of any kind—for the good political life in the workaday world.

Young people who were "radicalized" in the '60s could (if they looked) find activities, homes, communities and work in which to express those radical values that had changed their lives, their sense of themselves. Now, mysticism, spiritualism and therapeutics provide the ready shelters for the politically lost or strayed—and also pick up naturally those who had no other home. There are new organizations, communities and institutions to join; a new way to make sense of the world and provide a meaningful and hopeful outlook; a new program for work and life in accord with a belief system amidst a structure of support.

[THE CONVERSION OF RENNIE DAVIS]

The spectrum of trips is so broad that it may not be possible to include the whole band in a single analysis—or even in one coherent description of the phenomenon (the same might have been said of the political range of the mid-'60s). These things change rapidly, but as of this week I have friends in a Zen community on the coast of Maine, an Arica house on the beach at Santa Monica, a Gestalt-Sufi retreat in Berkeley, an ashram in New Hampshire, a messianic religious organization's headquarters in Colorado, and several related non-geographical regions of the mind. All of these New Mystics were New Leftists, feminists, radicals and activists of one kind or another a few years ago. I've spent some time with two of them in recent weeks, and their conversions, conditions and activities have given me some illustrations of the larger phenomenon.

Rennie Davis became a devotee of the Satguru Maharaj Ji at the end of a course of events that included dreams and mystical experiences, the Indochina cease-fire, and a visit with Madame Binh in Paris. In the first of the dreams (as he related it to me), Davis was at the speaker's rostrum in an enormous auditorium. He felt some anxiety because he was not sure what he was supposed to say. Suddenly "every Vietnamese I ever knew" and a lot more came into the hall. They were "blissed out," brimming with joy and confidence and a sense of victory. Davis awoke similarly joyful, some of his anxieties allayed about his deeply-felt responsibility for carrying on the anti-war political struggle.

A few days later he awoke from a deep sleep at 4:30 in the morning (his tale continued) sensing the presence of a close woman-friend on his bed. He reached out to touch her but she was not there, at least on the level of "ordinary"

(Continued on page 47)

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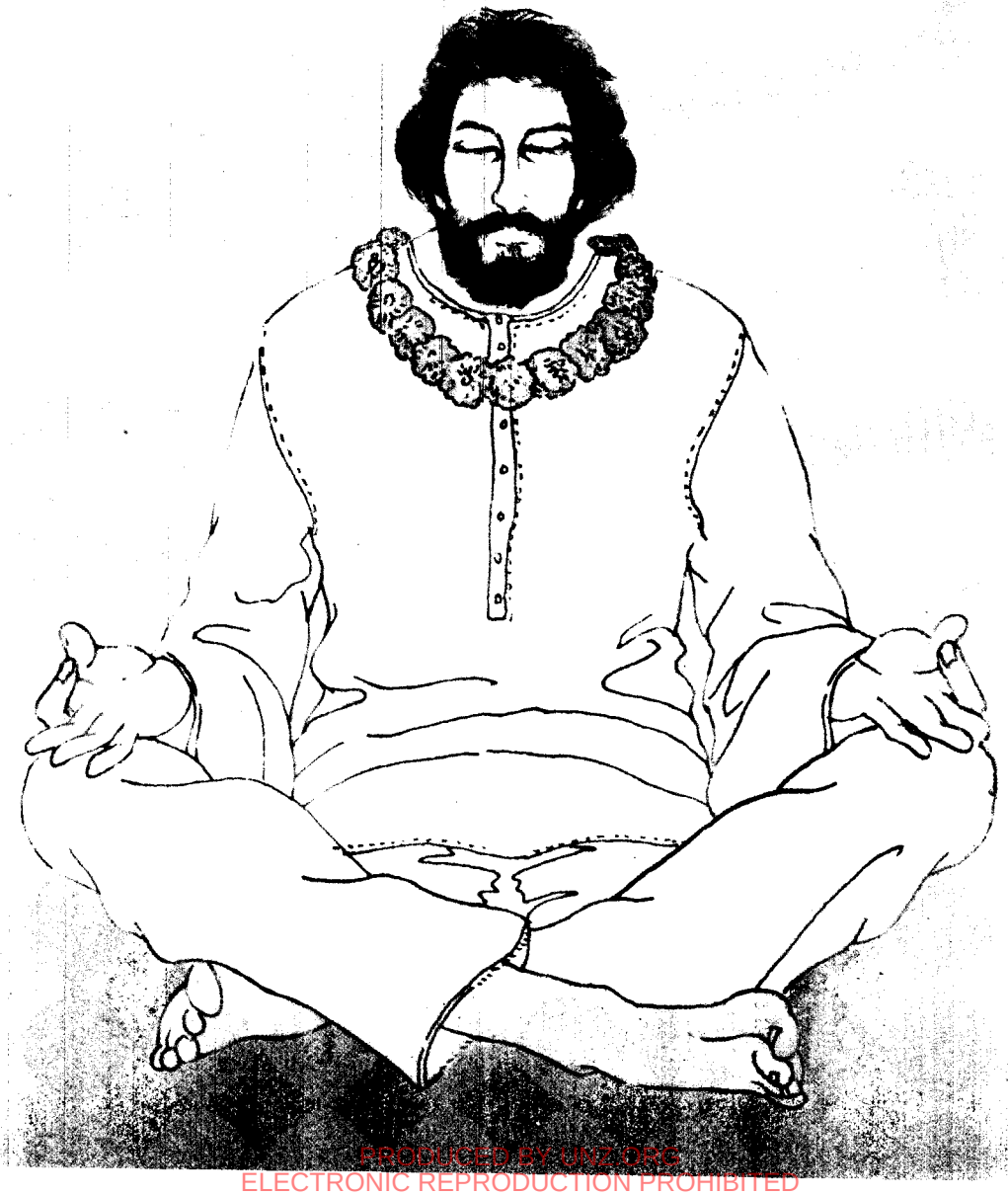

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A Reader's Guide to the New Mysticism

by Joshu

This categorization of cults, religions and spiritual schools of the New Mysticism is in some ways a contradiction of the mystical process itself. Lao Tzu (via a translator, Wytter Bynner) warned:

"Leave off fine learning! End the nuisance
Of saying yes to this and perhaps to that,
Distinctions with how little difference!
Categorical this, categorical that,
What slightest use are they!"

There being no easy way out of that trap of explaining direct mystical experience in intellectual symbols, perhaps a way around is to make the categorization brief. Herewith, then, a short *selection* of chart-busting cults, growth stocks and consciousness-raising techniques that fall somewhere on the continuum from getting-in-touch-with-body to awakening the soul.

Ananda Marga: Although they have only about 3,000 active disciples in the U.S., the Ananda Marga society has received press coverage recently because their founder and spiritual leader, Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, is on trial in India. Anandamurti, also called Baba, is accused of murdering seven former disciples, a charge which his followers say was trumped up by the Indian government. In April, an Ananda Marga monk immolated himself to protest his leader's imprisonment, and two CBS newsmen filming the event were arrested by Indian police. Ananda Marga's practice in America mixes meditation and "good works"—recycling, disaster relief, day care, visiting the old, the sick, the imprisoned. In India they are considered a militant anti-government group, and they recently moved their world headquarters from India to Wichita, Kansas.

Arica: A body of techniques for cosmic consciousness-raising and an ideology to relate to the world in an awakened way. Arica was named after the city in Chile where its developer, Oscar Ichazo, lived and worked before emigrating to that global energy center, New York. Arica draws heavily on Gurdjieff's categories of consciousness and ego, as well as concepts and methods in Sufism, Tibetan Buddhism, Yoga, Zen and various esoteric psychologies. Ichazo does not purport to be divine, nor is Arica a religion. Students take courses of various lengths at Arica Institutes around the country in order to awake from their sleepy consciousnesses. It is sophisticated, intellectualized, expensive and chic.

Divine Light Mission: The religious organization of the Satguru (Perfect Master) Maharaj Ji, an Indian adolescent who says He is God but is adulated more like a Brahmin Donny Osmond. The religion comes on to Western hippies as a psychedelic Hinduism or electric Yoga. But it is well-heeled, well-organized and surprisingly slick.

EST: Officially, the name is meant to connote the Latin for "it is," as well as to form an acronym for a number of phrases, such as Electronic Social Transformation, Eco-Strategy-Tactics, Environment Systems Theory, Equilibrium of Sensory Threshholds, Earth Survival Techniques, Exploration of Simulsense Totality, Ego Self Transcendence, and so on. Unofficially, it sometimes stands for Erhard Seminary (or Sensitivity) Training, after its conceiver, Werner Erhard. After going through an EST course, students are supposed to acquire the intellectual and cosmic tools necessary to understand and master planetary problems. The course is a mixture of Buckminster Fuller and Moral Re-Armament—which may not be much of a mixture at all. It is popular on the West Coast, and Jerry Rubin is an enthusiast—although he claims it is merely one of many such courses he has taken recently.

The Foundation: Stephen Gaskin is one of the few home-grown American freak gurus who are not apostles of a particular Oriental religion. Americans prefer import-gurus the way they prefer Third World knicknacks at fancy bou-

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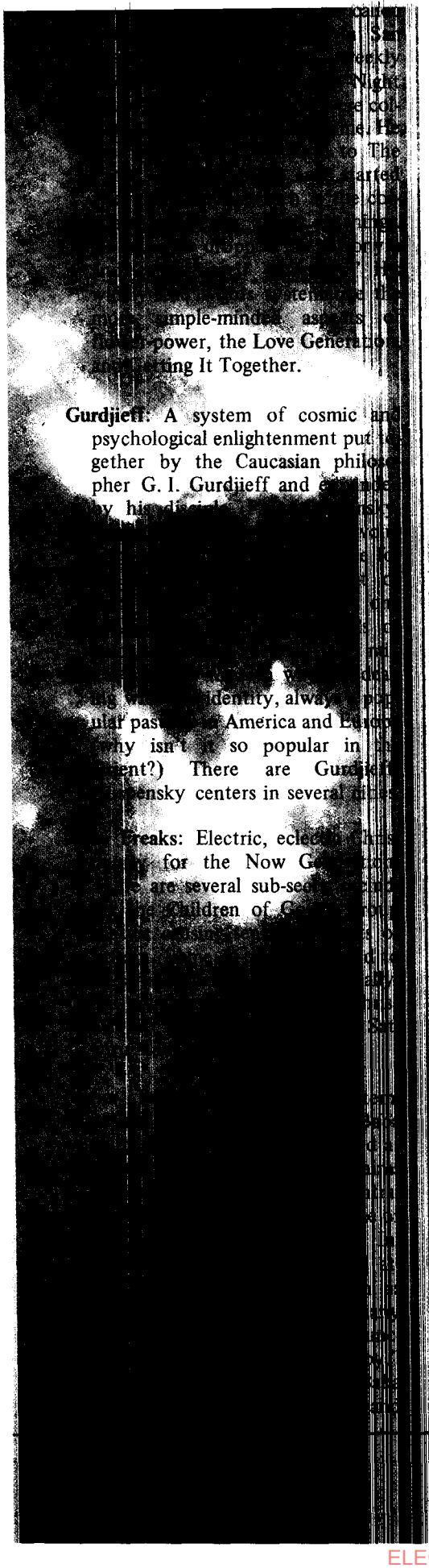

the British rock group The Who is into Him. (The rock opera *Tommy* is purported to be based on His life.)

Mind Control: There are various commercial and non-commercial operations that use machines or meditative techniques to teach clients how to regulate the electrical functions of their own brains so as to produce jects feel good. Biofeedback techniques may also allow subjects to control other functions of their body, including the autonomic nervous system. Silva Mind Control, a successful commercial version, uses no machines. Most mind control techniques do not fall into the category of cosmic cult, but they share many of the methods—and expectations—of cosmic psychology.

Sufism: Originally a Persian and Islamic mystical tradition, Sufi teachings are now studied and practiced throughout the world. Sufism is nothing if not trendy this year; it has been called the "chic of Araby." The Sufi Dervishes used whirling and dancing to produce the state of ecstasy, and Sufi enthusiasts today similarly employ dancing, music and movement. The international Sufi heavy is Idries Shah, who lives and writes in England. Sufis like word games and practical jokes—so look out!

Tibetan Buddhism: A Himalayan form of Zen, currently an underground trend in some student and intellectual circles in America. The popularizer in America is Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, who is said to be the former head abbot of a Tibetan monastery before he left when his country was liberated by the Chinese in 1959. He came here by way of England, and established two centers, the Tail of the Tiger in Vermont and Karma Dzong in Colorado. One important (and appealing) feature of Tibetan Buddhism is its wry cynicism: masters tell their students to "doubt," rather than "have faith."

Yogis: There are probably hundreds of Indians and others in America who have become gurus in the Yogic tradition. Yoga is an Indian form of Buddhist mysticism, which involves physical exercise, breathing rituals and meditative processes to lightenment. There are scores of Yogic schools, centers and ashrams in the U.S., some of them well-established like the Self-Realization Fellowship, in California, founded by Paramahansa Yogananda ("The Autobiography of a Yogi"). There are also various yogis, gurus, babas and swamis, either in America or India, who maintain important followings here:

Yogi Bhajan, practitioner of Kundalini Yoga in his 3HO—Healthy Happy Holy Organization; Swami Satchidananda, who performed at Woodstock, and runs the Integral Yoga Institute; Swami Vishnudevananda of the International Sivananda Yoga and Vedanta Society; the Maharishi Mahesh Yoga, once the Fifth Beatle, subject of John Lennon's vicious lyrics in "Sexy Sadie," who conducts Transcendental Meditation; and Baba Ram Dass, a.k.a. Richard Alpert, the hottest American mystic these days, follower of an Indian guru.

Zen: Japanese Buddhist mysticism, comprising sects and subsects. Teachings and meditative systems are designed to lead a student to enlightenment, or *satori.* Zen is an austere, ascetic and pure system that most Americans find difficult to penetrate, although those who do find it enormously meaningful. An entire Zen culture flourishes in Japan, and a small one is growing in the U.S. There are many Zen centers, including a Zen community in Maine directed by an American *roshi* who spent many years in Japan. There exists a rich Zen literature of stories, sayings, poems and parables. One of the great masters was Hakuin (18th century), who devised the *koan*, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" He also wrote the frequently used chant:

"Sentient beings are intrinsically Buddha. . . .
This very place is the Lotus land, this very body the Buddha."

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BLISSED OUT WITH THE PERFECT MASTER

"This is the real thing, not a wax banana"

For an entire week, Berkeley buzzed in anticipation of the return of Rennie Davis. The incredible story of his conversion to the divine prodigy, Satguru Maharaj Ji, had been revealed in a 40-minute interview on the local FM rocker KSAN. Not only was he dedicating his entire life to Maharaj Ji, but by 1975 Mao Tse-tung himself would be bowing in homage before the teenage theomorphic guru. The reaction ranged from sympathy to Paul Krassner's insistence that the entire enterprise was a CIA plot. In between were those who felt that Davis was bummed out by the abuse heaped on him as an active, white, male Movement heavy, disappointed by the disintegration of the anti-war movement and therefore open to the love-vibes and Telex technology which form the core of the Satguru's appeal. Whatever the explanation, everyone was curious, and they itched to see the new Rennie Davis and hear him explain it all in the flesh.

He chose Pauley Ballroom on the U.C. campus to make his stand, a site which overlooks the famous Sproul Plaza. There, some eight years earlier, Mario Savio and his fellow students had marched to shut down the university, thereby unloosing a flood of campus protest which did not subside for five years. Rennie Davis had played a crucial role in that Movement. He had raised money, mapped strategy, given speeches, negotiated permits, written pamphlets—in short, he had done everything that the Movement had done and more. When others had grown tired and cynical, he had worked on and on, and it was only in recent months that he had begun to slacken his pace.

People had come to view Rennie Davis as better, more dedicated than the rest of us, and now, suddenly, he was telling us to surrender our hearts and minds to a barely pubescent self-proclaimed Perfect Master from India and waltz into Nirvana. It was as if Che Guevara had returned to recruit for the Campfire Girls: the anomaly was as profound as the amazement.

And so they packed the ballroom to hear Rennie Davis, and one sensed curiosity, a certain amount of hostility, and an undercurrent of fear. As he stood before the assemblage, the vultures descended. "Kiss my lotus ass." "All power to the Maharajah, huh?" He took it in with smiles and good humor. "I'm really blissed out with a capital 'B,' " he proclaimed in the vernacular of his new calling. "I'm just here to make a report, and if you don't want to check out what I'm saying, that's cool. Sooner or later you'll find out that we are operating under a new leadership, and it is Divine, that it's literally going to transform the planet into what we've always hoped and dreamed for." This is what the Hindu mystics call *satsang*—literally, truthgiving. It plays the role in Eastern religion that street-corner rapping did back in the old days when Rennie Davis was the guiding light of the JOIN community organizing project in Chicago.

Now Davis, all cosmic dimples, ignored the slings and

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by Ken Kelley

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arrows and continued his mass *satsang*. The crowd's initial curiosity turned to hostility and derision. A local wino stood on a chair and harangued the multitude about God and jail and politics—much to their delight. Davis waited patiently for him to finish, then continued his report. It was late now, and people were beginning to drift off. Anxious to get on with the showing of the official film on Guru Maharaj Ji, he began to conclude his remarks and sought a way to rekindle interest. "The Guru Maharaj Ji," he said, "teaches us that Truth, Knowledge and Bliss are inherent in our human souls." He paused "And I say to you here that Richard Nixon is Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss."

The tomatoes flew; down came the linen-draped altar with the Perfect Master's Divine visage; and catcall city erupted. Mouths agape, blank stares and unbelieving faces, fury bleeding out of every wound. One had to admire the sheer nerve of this man to keep talking and not wilt in the face of such hysterical opposition. Instead, he raised his hands in a serene gesture of halcyon. "If I weren't absolutely convinced that this is the greatest event mankind has ever known, if I didn't believe with my entire soul that Guru Maharaj Ji is going to save the planet, then I wouldn't be placing myself so far out on a limb. I love all of you very much." And then, "Jai Satchitanan." "Hail Truth, Knowledge and Bliss," the ancient sanskrit definition for the three aspects of God. Whereupon his ashram apostles began a celestial chant, the lights went out and the movie projector started to roll.

[THE ROAD TO BLISS]

The next day I observed Rennie Davis in his own milieu in the Unitarian church where the "*premies*," or devotees (the word literally translates as "lovers") were holding their weekly *satsang* service. After some sluggish guitar work and blissed-out meditation, he rose to speak. "Last night was very far out. I only wish people have the space to listen now to what Guru Maharaj Ji is saying. But through His Divine Grace everyone will, in time. We're just so lucky to be here. Every morning I wake up and just can't believe that I'm alive and fortunate enough to have discovered His Knowledge."

He then went into a cosmic peptalk, culminating in a fund-raising pitch for Soul Rush '73, the divine exposition slated for November in the Astrodome, and for the perfect city which, according to plan, will be built by next year in California. Davis is a pitchman from way back, and he has in his day raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Movement. This time, however, there was an important difference in the appeal.

"When I think of what in two short years in America we've accomplished . . ." He stopped and his eyebrows arched. "I mean, what Guru Maharaj Ji has accomplished; we've accomplished nothing, of course—it blows my mind."

The next morning, I visited him at the San Francisco Ashram. He greeted me at the door with a kiss. On the lips. (I have known Rennie Davis for almost five years, and we've embraced warmly many times, but never before had he initiated such communion.) Removing my shoes, an act prerequisite to entering the room where the Divine Presence is worshipped, I listened as Rennie told me of his conversion and what had led up to it.

For the previous year, he had been getting "more into myself," even as he worked on the Miami demonstrations last summer. He dropped acid, fasted, ate organic food, hiked in the mountains, and generally eased the pace which had earned him a reputation as one of the most intense activists in the anti-war movement. After the cease-fire accords were announced in January, he prepared a trip to Paris with veteran peace organizers Cora Weiss and Sidney Peck to represent the American Movement at the celebrations following the signing. He then planned to return and help form a "national party" of the left, a feat many have attempted without success since the demise of SDS.

But something funny happened on the way to Paris. Boarding the plane at the same time were a group of *premies* including, Rennie said, an old friend named Larry Canada.

Now it so happens that I shared a grand jury inquest with Larry Canada back in 1971. He and I and four others were being questioned in the course of what the Justice Department claimed was an investigation into the bombing of the Capitol building on March 1, 1971. All of us had worked in Mayday and had been in town the day the Weather underground blew the minds and walls of Congress apart. The Torquemadas of the Justice Department figured the explosion had to be related to Mayday, and they took particular interest in Canada and his ex-wife Kathy Noyes, an heiress to the Eli Lilly drug fortune. The two of them had contributed almost $75,000 to the Mayday project.

PHOTOS BY "AND IT IS DIVINE"

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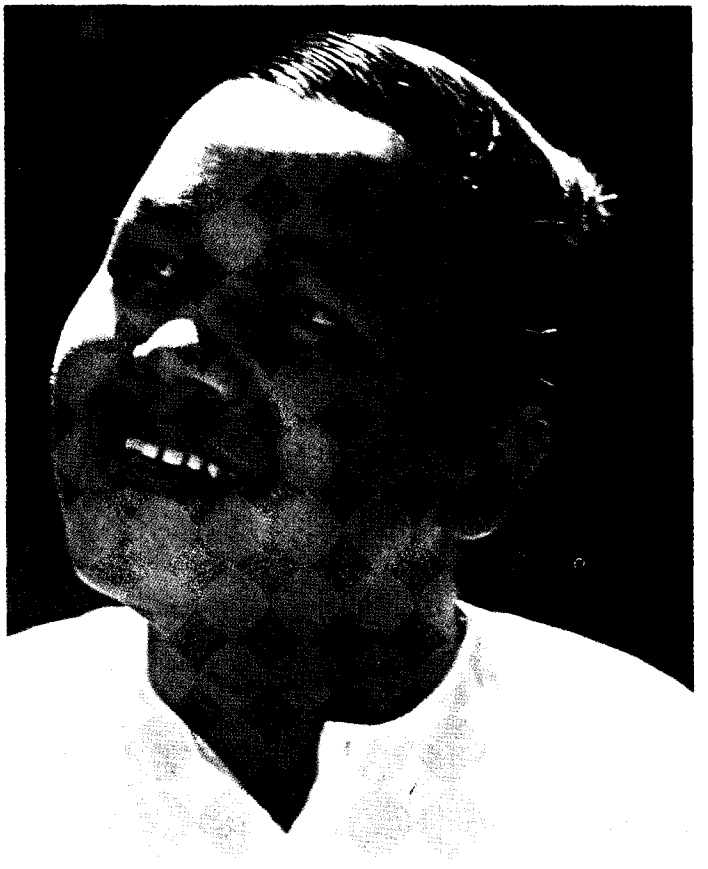
Canada was unique among the Mayday tribe, aside from his rather special financial status. He was our resident mystic. Recruited off his Indiana farm, he had moved into Rennie's Washington apartment, took lots of LSD and fantasized an incredible blueprint for the shutdown of D.C. He wanted to bring in the Beatles, feed 100,000 people for a week, and send a Rebel Navy up the Potomac to meet the troops closing the bridges. It was a fine dream, especially insofar as he would foot the bill. At one point, he had even gone to Ottawa to inform the Chinese legation of Mayday's plans. The legend of his lunacy was matched only by that of his generosity. In a tight spot, you could always count on Larry.

By the time the Grand Jury proceedings began, Canada had undergone a remarkable change. One day I came upon him reading a Bible in the hallway outside the Grand Jury room. I assumed he had picked it up from the hotel to pass the time as he waited to be called. In fact, he had brought it all the way from Indiana, where he and his wife had become full-fledged Jesus freaks. They approached Christianity with the same zeal they had shown in Mayday, and when called to testify, Larry did not shrink from quoting Ecclesiastes to the federal prosecutor.



But on the plane to Paris Larry Canada was preaching a new gospel, and Rennie was listening. "He talked with Canada and his crew for over three hours," recalls Cora Weiss. "And when he came back and told us about their scene he was—well, really smiling." Among Canada's "crew" was Charles Cameron, one of the first Western devotees of the Satguru. A gaunt-faced Englishman who fancies himself a poet, Cameron took on the task of giving *satsang* to the anti-war activist. "It really blew Rennie's mind," Cameron told me. "I could see right away that he was open to what I was saying though he wasn't taking it all in." Rennie discounts this, however—"I just thought 'here are some down-to-earth folks,' considering how ridiculous their rap is—you know?"

In any event, he was interested enough to follow it up in Paris, and he slipped away at least once a day to visit his holy friends at the posh Georges V Hotel. After the peace festivities were concluded, he stayed behind and continued receiving *satsang*. "He told us he was just staying for a couple of more days," said Weiss. But Larry Canada was feeling particularly philanthropic—"he had about $20,000 to blow," according to Cameron. So Rennie was offered a free trip to India as part of the "Divine Scouting mission" to Prem Nagar—City of Love—where Maharaj Ji, his mother, and his three brothers hold forth. "We had originally gone to Paris to see if we could figure out a way of going to Vietnam and China to do some filming," relates Cameron. "Larry Canada had told us that's where Rennie would be, and that if anyone could arrange for us to go there, he could. So imagine the incredibly cosmic coincidence of actually meeting on the plane—it's *perfect*. But Rennie told us there was no way to visit Vietnam or China right now, so we settled on India. We could film Guru Maharaj Ji and Rennie could check out everything we had been telling him firsthand."

First stop was Delhi where the party proceeded to a relatively new ashram called Punjab Bagh. There they met Bal Bhagwan Ji, the Satguru's 21-year-old brother. He is known in the Divine Light Mission as Maharaj Ji's "most devoted follower" and one whose divinity and position is second only to the Satguru. Rennie talked for hours with Bal Bhagwan Ji, and their discussion turned to Vietnam. "He has an incredible love for the Vietnamese," says Rennie. "He is also the smartest person I've ever met."

It was a significant meeting. It was, in fact, unusually significant because, as Cameron says, "members of the holy family don't give away their smiles and tears as readily as we human beings, and Bal Bhagwan Ji was smiling and tears were welling in his eyes . . . And for Bal Bhagwan Ji to show those emotions so soon is extraordinary—usually he would wait. But it was the *perfect* moment, in Rennie's case."

[GOD'S GAME-PLAYING]

If he established immediate rapport with the "most devoted follower," he did not take such instant liking to the Avatar Himself. On the contrary, he now describes his first impression of Guru Maharaj Ji as "terrible": "Here was this fat little rich kid with this swarm of old men—Mahatmas—blowing and kissing His feet. And instead of acknowledging that respect, He jumped on this big motorcycle and tore off, completely covering them with dust. Then He screeched to a stop, turned around and headed back towards them. At the last possible moment

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they jumped out of the way—He kept right on going. Then He ended up in this field of mud and got stuck. They came over and eventually pushed Him out, getting completely covered with mud and slime in the process. Then He attached this mattress to the back of his bike, took one of the old men and told him to lie on it, and tore off again with the Mahatma flopping ridiculously on the back.

"Of course I couldn't relate to it, then," says Rennie. "But afterward I realized it was *lila*—God's game-playing—that was reducing all of us to a child-like state, something Guru Maharaj Ji always seeks to do to us to remind us that we must always be simple like children.

"I kept getting more and more freaked—the whole thing stank of fraud. But there were about 60 western young people at Prem Nagar, and I kept having these great raps with them. People would come up to me and say 'Far out—I was with you in the streets of Chicago,' or 'Good to see you again, last time I saw you was at Mayday.' Slowly my resistance began to break down as I saw that these great people were really into this kid. So I decided I would at least try and receive Knowledge."

Receiving Knowledge (with a capital K) is the experience that separates the mind from the soul and the *premies* from the zombies. It is—to use the Divine expression—the *perfect* experience, and it only comes after receiving a *perfect* pre-education from a Mahatma. This can,. in some cases, last years, but for Rennie Davis it took considerably less time. At five in the morning on a bright January day he began experiencing the four techniques of receiving Knowledge.

"I was first shown a technique called 'light,' where I saw light in my head that was a hundred times lighter than the sun. And it was fantastic, but my mind, seeing this light, just went crazy. I said 'no, no, no'—this is a fraud. Then the second thing I was taught was 'music.' At the center of creation are sounds that support creation—I heard a bell that made me more blissed out than I've ever been in my life, and my mind started hearing really loud rock 'n' roll, and I just went crazy some more. Then the third technique was called 'nectar'—when Jesus went into the desert for 40 days he was drinking Nectar. It's a mechanism inside your body that sustains you without food or water. And the fourth is called the 'word.' You know, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God'—the Last Gospel stuff, every scripture talks about the Word. It turns out there's a vibration in your body, and He teaches you what this vibration is.

"Then my mind just completely flipped out and said 'Get out of India. He's the Anti-Christ, a fake.' And I went outside and was dragged off by this Mahatma to wash some clothes, my service for the day." Every *premie* is expected to perform diurnal service for the Perfect Master, whether it be envelope-licking in the ashram of dishwashing. "I was sitting there by this water trying to figure out how this could be a fraud, trying to figure out a theory of how this could not be real even though I'd just experienced it. I thought, 'I've just been taken in, these are only techniques.' Then I noticed this crow sitting on a branch. Then another. Then a couple more. Pretty soon there are like 50 crows sitting there cackling at me, flying around. Then they start flying closer and closer, 'til finally one dives for my head dead ringer and I managed to jump just in time. It was right out of Hitchcock—all these birds screaming at me and going crazy and swooping down on me. It was out of control.

"And at the point where I was literally terrified for my life, I pulled out of my laundry this pillowcase. Embroidered on it was this phrase, 'Lord of the Universe.' It was just an amazing kind of coincidence in the midst of this freakout. I pulled out that pillowcase and instantly the crows

(Continued on page 50)

Guru Maharaj Ji revs up his motorcycle while Rennie Davis stands "blissed out" in the background

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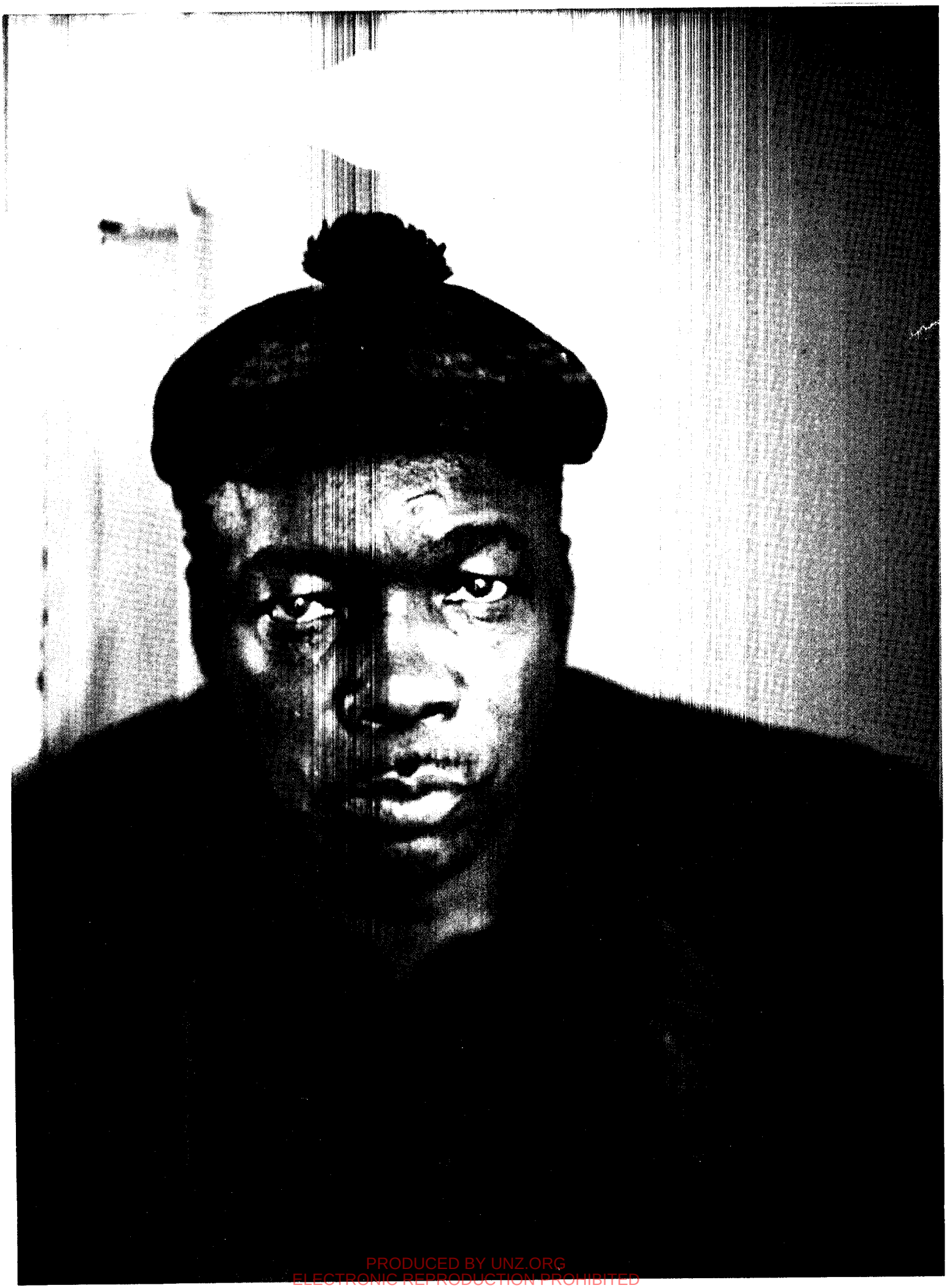

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Boogie Lightnin'

John Lee Hooker and the Electrified Blues

by Michael Lydon

"The world," said John Lee Hooker, "is a natural born jungle." A stew bubbled on the yellow stove. Bright California winter sunshine beamed through net curtains. Hooker stood in his kitchen. His long arms hung relaxed at his sides; his hands lined and pulpy soft. He had on a bright red shirt, nondescript brown pants, and suede rubber soled shoes; no belt. On his head was a skinny-brim hat of horsehide. He turned to the stove, lifted the lid of the stew, smelled hard, and grinned. As he straightened up, his thought came back to him. A slow sadness moved over his face. "People don't know which way to go. They are confused. Lost in this world. That is what I see. Race against race, religion against religion, people fighting. It is hard to explain."

In the living room, resting on an aquamarine expanse of wall-to-wall, was a Florentine-style phonograph console rigged up with flashing red and blue light panels. One of his recent albums was on at medium volume. A nice lick caught his ear. "That, that was Steve Miller."

He sat down at the table. "Now where was we at? Yeah. My music is the blues. It tells my story, my problems. People can listen, maybe it'll help them solve their problems. We could be one happy family in this world. We're in it together, enough room for everybody." He looked straight at me. "We're not here to stay, you know, we is just passing through."

[THE MUSIC MOVES NORTH]

In 1948, as John Lee Hooker remembers, a man named Elmer Barbara lived at 609 Lafayette Street in Detroit, Michigan. Barbara owned a small record store and in the back had a primitive record cutting lathe, on which he could make passable dubs. Like most such, the store was a musician's hang-out, and Barbara, a watchful sentry at the recording industry's remotest border, fancied himself a talent scout. That a Bing Crosby-to-be would stroll in wasn't likely, but a future Inkspot or Louis Jordan might. Who knew what made for success in the record biz? Yet to Barbara and many others, some facts were obvious.

Blacks bought records when they could afford to, and in 1948 more could than ever before. Equally important from a businessman's point of view, they were reachable as a market. Selling to black Americans before the war had been by mail order or small-order salesmanship on backwoods routes out of Willy Loman's nightmares. After the war, however, millions of blacks were living in the big cities of the North, Midwest, and West.

These were blacks a business could get to, concentrated in numbers large enough to make a bulk operation profitable. They didn't have much money but they spent what they did have on fast turnover consumer items. Barbara had more new customers in his store than he had new records to sell them. The major record companies had let their race catalogues atrophy in the war years. They still recorded jazz irregularly, and pushed only that black music which had an equal if not predominant white appeal.

It made sense for Barbara to help supply himself by getting records made that he could sell. There was available talent. In the migration had come musicians—not many jazzmen or band-trained players who could read charted arrangements and get jobs in Detroit's established music market, but blues singers, pickers, blowers, and thumpers. Their music—sometimes raw, sometimes elegant—was fiercely individual and made little or no reference to the kinds of music then deemed popular. In the South the bluesmen had chopped cotton by day and played fish fries at night; they swept offices and washed cars in the North, playing the bars around midnight. They had arrived with their audience—get them on wax and a record business was ready made.

"I came to Detroit in 1942, when I was about 20," said John Lee. "Originally I'm from Clarksdale, Mississippi, the Delta. Now I haven't been there for a *long* time. I started playing the guitar when I was 13 years old. I learned from my stepfather, Willy Moore. The style I play now, he played then. Too bad he never made anything out of it." Moore was an accomplished blues guitarist, and the young John Lee heard not only him, but Blind Lemon Jefferson, Charlie Patton, and others whose names are lost who came to play at Moore's house. When he left the Delta for Memphis at 14, he believed he was *good.* Memphis didn't care, so he moved on to Cincinnati. He left there for Detroit and war work in the booming motor factories. He had never stopped playing, and after the war started getting jobs in the clubs along Detroit's Hastings Street. At times he even had a small group with him; mostly he worked alone.

Michael Lydon is the author of Rock Folk, *now a Delta paperback, and* Boogie Lightning, *to be published this winter by Dial Press.*

PHOTO BY AL VAN DEN BERG

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"First we put a mike onto his guitar and we put a speaker in a toilet bowl next door. Then we put a mike under that so the sound would echo off the water. Then I put a board under his feet to make his tapping louder, and put a mike down there."

"I had heard that this Elmer Barbara was cutting local guys who played guitar and harmonica, stuff like that. I walked in one day. He worked with me night and day for months, cutting dubs and trying different experiments. But he didn't have the set-up to make real records, so when we had something that was good, I took it to Bernard Besman. I didn't know Besman, but he was a record distributor who also had a label, the Sensation label. He liked the dub, and I started working with him."

Bernard Besman, then about 30, was a small frog in the next bigger pond. A pianist who loved the rippling swing of Earl "Fatha" Hines, he himself had worked under the name Dean Dennis and had played a commercially passable imitation of Carmen Cavallero. But even before the war, he had been more drawn to the business of music than to a performing career.

In the army Besman booked bands for the Special Services, and after discharge he teamed up with an accountant friend to distribute records in Michigan for the Los Angeles-based Pan American label. Now in North Hollywood himself and in the toy business–his company has the Bozo the Clown merchandising franchise–he remembers his Detroit days with a phlegmatic pleasure.

"Playing music and selling records, I found out, are two different things," he said, sitting on a back office couch. "In 1946 we got a little store on Linwood Avenue, did well from the start. Rafael Mendez, a trumpet player, had a hit on Pan American, as did Eddie Cantor. But one label wasn't enough to keep us going, so we got the Exclusive label, Joe Liggams of 'The Honeydripper' was with Exclusive; Johnny Moore, and that blues singer, Charles Brown, he was on it too. Then we got Modern and Aladdin. With them we had the three big race labels. The white stores wouldn't take their stuff, I'd say it went to an 85-90 percent black audience. Before us, those records weren't available in Detroit except by special order, and there were about half a million Negroes in the city then. We were doing $22,000 a month at the end of the first year."

Distribution got the product to the store; the problem was to get the customer in to buy it. Radio was the obvious answer–a record played is its own advertisement–yet so obvious that the big record companies tried to make sure that only their products got aired. "There weren't even disc jockies then, per se," said Besman, "there were radio announcers. Program directors picked the records, and they bought their own records. I was the first guy in Detroit to take records to the stations and give them away. The first real disc jockey in Detroit was Ed McKenzie, known as Jack the Bell Boy. He had a program and chose his own records. When I brought in my race records, he was afraid of them; maybe he'd squeeze in one in 20 on the air. But whatever he played would be popular. He was a red hot jockey."

An organ instrumental of "You Can't Be True, Dear" and then "Peg O'My Heart" by the Harmonicats–"If anybody tells you what record is going to go big, they don't know nothing"–put Besman and his partner on easy street. They moved to larger offices on Woodward Avenue next to the Paradise Theater which, like New York's Apollo, featured movies and name black acts. The flow of musicians and enthusiastic audiences gave Besman the same idea that was inspiring Elmer Barbara. In 1948 Besman recorded Todd Rhodes, a local black bandleader who headlined the Sensation Club. Rhodes did a tune called "Bell Boy Boogie" and Besman put it on his own label which he named Sensation after the club. McKenzie was of course flattered and made it his theme song. The record then did so well that Besman was able to lease it for national distribution to Vitacoustic, the company which had supplied him with "Peg O' My Heart." "After that people started coming in to me with dubs. About November, it was cold I know, John Lee Hooker walked in.

"He had on an old overcoat, and was skinny as could be, about my age, I thought. I looked at his shoes–I could see holes in them. He had a dub he had made someplace, real lousy reproduction, it was called 'Sally Mae,' a blues. He wanted to record, he said. He had a speech impediment, too; he stuttered, and I thought, 'My god, how can a man like that sing. I gotta see this, I'm gonna try it.' I said, 'I'll record you, but alone, nobody else.' The record he had brought in had piano and drums. I didn't like them. He played for me, and I thought he had possibilities, but I was puzzled."

Besman figured that in 1948 it would be tough to sell a bluesman playing solo guitar–that was old-fashioned. Band records had accustomed the blues audience to a fuller, larger sound. Yet he also intuited that Hooker sounded best alone. "I knew I had to do something. So first we amplified his guitar. He had an old Stella and no amp. We put a mike onto his guitar, and we put a speaker–this was a tiny two room studio, remember–we put it in a toilet bowl next door, actually in a toilet bowl. Then we put a mike under that so the sound would bounce off the water–I wanted an echo effect. Then the sound went back into a speaker in the studio, came out of that, and got picked up along with his voice. I put a board under his feet to make his tapping louder, and put a mike down there.

"We worked almost three hours on 'Sally Mae,' getting nowhere. So I thought, what the hell, why don't I have him do a boogie, Rhodes did so well with one. But Hooker didn't know how to play a boogie. . . . Finally he got it, or part of, a semblance of a boogie. 'Boogie Chillen' isn't really a boogie, but John Lee, he had enough originality that it was a big record."

"Boogie Chillen" was indeed a big record; it sold several hundred thousand copies–an enormous sale for a blues record in 1948. Moved by distributors like Besman in Chicago, Philly, Memphis, and Oakland, and aired by disc jockies like Jack the Bell Boy in New York, Nashville,

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Boston, and Cleveland, it was a hit. Moreover, they were able to follow it up; Hooker and Besman did many sessions after the first one, and 16 records were released on the Sensation label over the next three years. All had solid sales. "John Lee never wrote *songs,*" said Besman, "He was illiterate. He'd have a subject matter, or I'd suggest something, and he'd do something with it, making up the words as he went along. He never had a plan, so the same song always came out different. He could make a story out of anything. In reality he's a genius."*

[THE ELECTRIFIED, CITIFIED BLUES]

John Lee Hooker was not alone. In that migration north and cityward came a generation of bluesmen who were, as record jackets like to proclaim, giants. They had to be. It was a very difficult life they faced in the northern ghettoes, and they had to struggle every day to survive. In the city, family and church did not hold so strong; the land and tradition had been left behind. To make music of city-life required imagination and indomitability. The old theme of the blues could be reworked to express new dimensions of dislocation, but the sound and pace of country blues fit the city no better than brogans and bib overalls. Back in the Delta, one man played a guitar with the low accompaniment of crickets and whippoorwills; Detroit and Chicago never stopped their roar. How to make sounds which could stab through that noise with the same intensity country blues had in its setting was a musical problem that many bluesmen new to the city encountered mid-career. They had to solve it to continue to make sense as artists, and to get work as musicians.

The answer was electricity in all available forms. Electrifying the blues guitar was the most dramatic change. "You *had* to play electric in those clubs, they were so noisy," Hooker recalled, "but the sounds you could make! I loved electricity. You barely have to touch the guitar, and the sound comes out so silky. Electric sound is so lovely. I felt drawn into it. T-Bone Walker, he was the cat we all listened to for electric."

Walker, a gnomelike Texan, drew notes from his amplifier which would hang in the air, glistening and tremulous, sending shivers through his audiences. He made it big with "Stormy Monday" (though the days have different names, the song says, one is no better than the next). Lowell Fulsom learned from Walker, so did B. B. King and Albert King. Muddy Waters took all he had learned from Robert Johnson, Son House, and Charley Patton; he added his own hooded fierceness, and made it electric in Chicago. His band—over the years there have been several bands—became the prototypical city blues band to which electricity was indispensable. Guitar, bass, and often piano were electric, vocals came loud through a public address system. Waters' harmonica player, the late "Little Walter" Jacobs, played his harp directly into a microphone, creating sounds which are still haunting on records.

Howlin' Wolf was part of that generation and a complete original. His personality is engraved on his records as indelibly as are those of the Parisian stonecutters on the gargoyles of Notre Dame. Elmore James, J. B. Lenoir, J. B. Hutto, Arthur Crudup, the magnificent Sonny Boy Williamson on amplified harmonica—these men and others, created electric blues in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Chicago was the center of the movement and records produced by Leonard and Phil Chess document it well. Chicago became the blues mecca, but the new urban blues happened all over the country—in Memphis, Houston, Los Angeles, Oakland, and Detroit, and on labels like Sun, Aladdin, Specialty, Modern, Kent, Black and White, Aristocrat, Excelsior, and VeeJay, plus numerous others.

"John Lee never wrote songs. He was illiterate. He'd have a subject matter and he'd do something with it, making up the words as he went along. He never had a plan, so the same song always came out different. He could make a story out of anything."

Hooker recorded for many of them. While he was working with Besman, he also did sessions with Detroit's Joseph Von Battle, one of the first black record producers, who put out Hooker on his own JVB label (years later he was the first to record Aretha Franklin).

Many musicians have played under pseudonyms to hide their moonlighting, but John Lee Hooker must have set a record. His discography is a melange of names—from John Booker to Texas Slim. "I was after the big bread," Hooker said, "I didn't care what they called me, or who they were, if they'd pay me, I'd play. I never changed my style, but I'd change my name." He didn't make big bread but did work steadily, an accomplishment in itself.

He was even then an impressive stage performer. Besman remembered one early concert. "I got him on a show a radio man put together, a theater concert with five different bands, swing, Dixieland, dance, something for everybody. He put John Lee on in the middle. He came out all by himself, sat down, and started playing. People didn't know what to make of him, whether to laugh, boo, or listen. After the first number, there was complete silence. Then John Lee started up again, a boogie, and people started tapping their feet. He had 'em then, by the end, they were shouting."

In the late '50s, however, work fell off. "Those were the hardest days," Hooker recalled. Like the other electric bluesmen (and jazz and country musicians), he found it hard to compete with the rhythm and blues and rock 'n' roll bands which after 1956 took the spotlight from all but the most popular performers.

A core of loyal blues fans, however, made it worthwhile for Hooker to continue touring and recording. Rock 'n'

(Continued on page 57)

*** Many of the Hooker-Besman sides have been re-released on three excellent LP's, two on the specialty label (*John Lee Hooker Alone* and *Going Down Highway 51*) and one on United Artists (*Anywhere, Anyplace, Anytime*).**

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CAMBODIA

The War at the End of the Tunnel

"No one really cares about Cambodia," a Cabinet Member in the Lon Nol government told me bitterly in 1970. "The Americans, Thieu, the communists—all they care about is Vietnam." This remains true in 1973; to the Americans, the Russians, the Chinese, the Vietnamese, and the Thais, Cambodia is just a domino not important for itself but for the influence it has on Asian power politics. And it is one of those ironies of history that Cambodia, which bloodlessly negotiated its independence from France and managed to escape much of the Vietnam War, now finds itself at the center of the next war in Indochina. Today the urgent questions about Southeast Asia do not involve the future of citadels like Saigon or Hue, but of Phnom Penh. Will the capital city fall? Will the Thais and the South Vietnamese be called upon to invade Cambodia? How will events there affect the rest of Indochina?

To anyone who has spent much time in Phnom Penh, it seems almost miraculous that the city has not already fallen. At different times over the last three years, guerrillas have been only a few miles outside the town and have frequently managed to cut off highways connecting the city with the provincial capitals. Ships bringing supplies up the Mekong River from Saigon have been sunk; rice and gasoline are regularly rationed; rockets occasionally slam into the downtown areas; and the only airfield has been hit several times. In recent months air strikes have moved close enough to the city that people routinely spend afternoons sitting by the river and watching the pyrotechnics from explosions on the opposite bank. The black market flourishes; bordellos do an almost assembly-line business; and everywhere there is evidence of decadence and despair.

Ailing President Lon Nol at inauguration

Diplomats with a flair for melodrama liken Phnom Penh to Shanghai before World War II. Politicians, however, are inevitably reminded of the last days of the Ngo Dinh Diem regime in South Vietnam. The ailing Marshal Lon Nol, swayed by his younger brother Lon Non and a court appointed astrologer, has cracked down on political opposition by making widespread arrests, closing most newspapers, and placing cronies in lucrative military and cabinet posts. Plots and counterplots flourish, cabinets rise and fail, and the Khmer Rouge guerrillas keep closing in from all sides. Exasperated American officials, shirt-sleeved in the heat, rush to and fro from government offices with proposals for government reform and military offensives.

Seemingly, the situation could not be worse. Yet while Phnom Penh is riddled with strange astrologers and soothsayers of all kinds, prediction of the future is a risky business, especially for westerners who habitually take a far too apocalyptic and accelerated view of events in Indochina. A North Vietnamese diplomat once told me when I asked him when Hue would fall, "We are making history and history takes time." What is unfolding in Cambodia will take time too.

[AMERICA'S BOTTOMLESS PIT]

To American journalists and officials in 1970, Cambodia seemed like an island in a sea of blood. Although right next door to Vietnam and Laos, it was miraculously free from the scars and bitterness of American occupation. Pentagon and CIA people, as well as White House hawks, had seen their long and patient intrigues rewarded by the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Now they were not only able to strike against

Judith Coburn made many trips to Cambodia as a journalist in 1970-73 and lived in Phnom Penh for a year as a reporter for Far Eastern Economic Review.

by Judith Coburn

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the southern end of the Ho Chi Minh trail, but had a new proving ground to demonstrate that they had indeed learned from their mistakes in South Vietnam. Demoralized American GI's entered Cambodia like a conquering army. They were happy to be spending their time in search and destroy missions against enemy arms caches instead of in firefights with tough NLF troops.

Then the bottom fell out. "If Vietnam was America's quagmire, then Cambodia is her bottomless pit," an Asian diplomat told me late that year. The sideshow that the Pentagon started by its raids on the Cambodian sanctuaries in April 1970 soon engulfed the country. A communist fighting force the Americans imagined was comprised of several brigades of invading North Vietnamese turned out to be an indigenous Khmer Army with an efficient governing apparatus that managed 75 percent of Cambodia's total territory. Everything that had made American officials despair about Vietnam was present to a greater degree in Cambodia. Instead of a faltering economy, Cambodia's was in outright collapse; instead of the standard corruption in the military, Cambodia's top generals were selling their own Army's weapons to the enemy. And over all hung the whimsical otherworldly lethargy of the Cambodians themselves who cheerfully allowed to sink into paralysis everything the busy, perspiring Americans thought ought to be accomplished.

As it worked out, Sihanouk's overthrow had thrown the life of the average Cambodian into disarray. For a relatively small group of students, civil servants, intellectuals and middle class professionals—most of them living in Phnom Penh—Sihanouk's ouster seemed to promise a new prosperity and an end to the corrupt, byzantine, state-run economy. Intellectuals who felt patronized by Sihanouk's court retinue and who had seen a depressing future inside the bloated government bureaucracy applauded the coup and rushed to join the Army.

But the majority of Cambodians—peasants farming the countryside who were against Sihanouk's overthrow—had their protests stilled by the Army, which fired into protesting crowds several times during the first week after the coup. That was the beginning of their suffering. Since

Cambodian refugees with all their possessions

Cambodian refugees from American bombs

March 1970, three million of Cambodia's peasants have become refugees. Some have joined the liberation forces, but most have fled to Phnom Penh to escape American bombing. Many refugees have become virtual nomads, moving several times in the last three years. (One family I talked to said they had always worked on one of the French rubber plantations until they had been forced to move in March 1970, by Vietnamese officials who airlifted them to South Vietnam. It was only after they had been shipped up the Mekong to Phnom Penh that it was explained they had been moved to get out of the way of the American/South Vietnamese invasion. Since that time, they have moved seven more times.)

There is no effective government aid program for these refugees, and no U.S. aid program as there was in Vietnam. Only 10,000 refugees are in any kind of camps. Most families flee to provincial capitals or to Phnom Penh, where they either move in with relatives or build squatters huts on the outskirts of town. Phnom Penh's population has tripled since the war began. But unlike Vietnam, there is no large American presence to provide jobs in income; and less than half of the male refugees can find work. Limited government food programs are ineffective because most of the food is siphoned off by corrupt officials and sold to the communists.

Wells Klein, an American social welfare expert who recently returned from Cambodia on a study mission for Senator Edward Kennedy's Subcommittee on Refugees, says the situation in Cambodia is characterized "by a level of mounting human suffering which may shortly surpass the worst we have seen in Vietnam." Malnutrition and starvation are imminent, Klein says. His report also details how medical care in Cambodia has deteriorated sharply since the war began. According to Klein, 45 percent of the hospitals and medical facilities in Cambodia have been destroyed. His report concludes that as many as 300,000 civilians have been killed or wounded in the last three years of fighting.

Those Cambodians, mostly more established city dwellers, who have not lost their families or possessions in the war are suffering the milder agony of wartime inflation. The Cambodian economy is, for all intents and purposes,

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bankrupt and kept afloat only by infusions of American dollars. The *riel* is now worth about one fourth of what it was in March 1970, and the prices of some commodities have tripled. Cambodia's two major exports, rice and rubber, have fallen victim to a destroyed transport system. What limited manufacturing facilities that existed in Cambodia before the war have been destroyed, including the country's only oil refinery. Guerrillas control a major part of the countryside, sectioning Phnom Penh off from the rice-growing areas to the northwest and making it necessary for the U.S. and Japan to supply Cambodia with most of her rice. "The only economy that really works [now] is the constant flow of illicit goods and weapons from this side to the Khmer communists," says one Cambodian economic expert.

[GOING TO THE JUNGLE]

The best thing that's happened to the Khmer Rouge in ten years is this government—and the Americans," one of Phnom Penh's more cynical diplomats is fond of saying. "All they have to do is sit back and wait for the whole house of cards to come down." The Khmer Rouge, who now call themselves part of the Gouvernement Royal D'Union Nationale du Cambodge have been, in an incredible three years, transformed from a small, isolated band of guerrillas into the backbone of a fighting force which controls 75 percent of Cambodia's territory and 40 percent of her population. They have, in effect, telescoped two decades of the Vietnamese experience into three short years.

The apparent weakness of the Cambodian left at the time of the coup gave the Lon Nol group and their American supporters an exaggerated idea of how easy it would be to oust Sihanouk and drive the Vietnamese out of Cambodia. But support for Sihanouk among the peasantry —the water in which guerrilla fish would soon be swimming —was drastically underestimated by Cambodian generals and their U.S. sponsors alike. Soon Khmer Rouge cadre, which had been blocked in their attempts to organize when Sihanouk was in power, were recruiting thousands of troops for their officers to lead against the Lon Nol Army.

Cambodian guerrillas welcome Prince Sihanouk

ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Since the attempted bombing of the Presidential Palace this March by the lover of one of Sihanouk's daughters, police round-ups, captained by Lon Non's secret police group (the Central Coordinating Committee), have increased. Over 300 students, intellectuals and journalists were swept up in the first week after the bombing and have not been heard from since. Lon Non's men have reportedly also been involved in a number of assassination attempts against opposition figures. Waves of defections to the guerrillas have commonly accompanied the series of arrests and when they are taking place, the capital's population stays glued to its radios to hear the latest reports on who has "gone to the jungles."

The Khmer Rouge political platform, drawn up in March 1970 after Sihanouk's arrival in Peking, is a broad statement of social reform within the same political and economic framework established by the Prince in the early '60s. Banks and foreign trade would again be nationalized, and the relatively small amount of land still held by large landowners would be redistributed. It also proposed that education be in Khmer instead of French and that Cambodia build up an independent national economy with diversified exports. But when Khmer cadre travel through liberated areas for political meetings, the most important issue is not the economy or educational system, but the American presence, the bombing, and the horrifying civilian casualty rate. "They use the Americans to wake up sleepy Khmer nationalism," jokes a Phnom Penh university professor. "The Americans—what great luck for the front."

[AMERICAN ADVISORS]

At the American Embassy in Phnom Penh there is much talk about "implementing what we learned in Vietnam." The American aid program to Cambodia is held up as the model for the Nixon doctrine's implicit policy of minimal funds for self-help against communism. In dollars and cents, the Cambodian aid program, which has crept up to around $300 million a year for economic and military programs, is a real bargain. The savings have been achived by the pursuit of a policy that could be described as guns without butter.

Judging from the American aid program in Cambodia, the American government seems to have learned three things from Vietnam: that bombing can be substituted for ground troops; that social welfare programs aren't worth the effort; and that if Congress opposes certain types of assistance, they can always be provided under another disguise. When Congress, in the summer of 1970, opposed U.S. involvement in advising the Cambodian military, the Pentagon came up with the Military Equipment Delivery Team (MEDT). MEDT officials, according to military men, do not dispense military advice, only assistance in using and maintaining the weaponry the Pentagon gives to the Cambodians. The distinction between military advice and combat advice seems lost on the Cambodians, however. On one visit to a battle area northwest of Phnom Penh in 1971 I was told by the local Cambodian commander in charge of operations, "Oh, too bad, you just missed my American advisor. He jumped in his helicopter when he saw you

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coming." When I asked what the American did when he visited the unit, the colonel replied, "He calls in air strikes, helps us direct artillery, read maps, that kind of thing." American helicopters have also, on rare occasions, transported wounded from the battlefield, and ferried ammunition to surrounded Cambodian troops. Although there have been unconfirmed reports from Cambodian soliders that Special Forces men are leading Cambodian troops behind the lines near the South Vietnamese border, so far the U.S. seems minimally involved, if at all, in this kind of direct combat role in Cambodia. But wherever the line between military advising and weapons delivery has been drawn in the past, it is becoming an increasingly fine line now.

Recently, when final withdrawal of U.S. 7th Air Force headquarters from Vietnam was completed, the American Embassy in Phnom Penh became directly involved in targeting for American air strikes in Cambodia. The set up is similar to the operations in Laos, where local officials make requests for bombing operations against certain targets, which are then cleared by a special bombing panel of Americans. (In Cambodia, Deputy Chief of Mission Thomas Enders is the chairman of the panel.) Embassy officials say the involvement of both American and local officers insures that fewer mistakes will be made. But investigators from Senator Kennedy's office contend that the maps the Embassy is using to check location of villages are several years old, and that the huge number of refugees who have moved makes plotting targets by maps very dangerous.

Once while they were covering an operation by his troops, reporters were told by Gen. Sosthene Fernandez, now Lon Nol's Chief of Staff, that he was about to liberate a village from communist hands. He admitted there were civilians in the town, but the way he outlined the operation it seemed that his troops had surrounded the town and would then move in cautiously to minimize casualties. "Now we move," said Gen. Fernandez. There was a tremendous artillery barrage, completely leveling the town. Only then did the Cambodian troops advance. "See!" said the general, "No more communists!"

Lon Nol troops near Phnom Penh

WIDE WORLD

This anecdote may sound apocryphal, but it is unfortunately typical—not only of the absurdities in the situation but of the Cambodian military's reliance on air power or artillery to do their fighting for them. U.S. military advisors despair in private about the refusal of Cambodian troops to patrol, attack offensively, or to move off roads while on operations. The traditional pattern in a clearing operation is that when the first contact with Front troops is made, government forces pull back and call in air support. Meanwhile, the communists, unless they are caught in open ground, either melt into the jungle or take cover.

[EXERCISE IN FUTILITY]

But if Cambodia is a military disaster, it is also an exercise in economic futility as well. American Embassy officials stress that their Cambodia program is designed to deal with the failures and inefficiencies of the larger aid programs in Vietnam and Laos. Rather than agreeing to underwrite deficit spending, for example, AID decided to provide just an import program to give the government cheap goods during wartime. A second purpose to the Cambodian program, according to AID officials, is to avoid having Cambodia get too dependent on the U.S. Thus there is no "project aid" as there was in Vietnam to build roads, industries or bridges.

American aid is funneled through two economic programs: a commodities import program and an Economic Support Fund. Sihanouk had originally opposed Cambodia's membership in the International Monetary Fund because he saw it as a U.S. front that was too politically oriented. The IMF was only too happy to become involved with the new government since it had always opposed Sihanouk's socialist economic programs. As the new regime moved ahead with the proposals to open Cambodia to foreign banks and business, the IMF, working hand-in-hand with U.S. AID officials, set up a series of requirements that the new government had to meet before U.S. or IMF aid could be given. A major stabilization program designed by the IMF was put in effect in 1971, calling particularly for a devaluation of the *riel* and the establishment of an Exchange Support Fund to provide the government with foreign exchange. The IMF then sponsored the meetings to encourage contributors to contribute to the fund.

The commodity import program (CIP) provides necessary commodities to the Cambodian government, which sells them to Cambodian importers for local retail. In spite of AID restrictions designed to prevent CIP funds from being used to import luxury goods, as they were in Vietnam, Congressional investigators have discovered that the Cambodians are getting air conditioners, soft drinks and televisions along with their fuel oil and other necessities. As for the claim that the economic aid program is designed to avoid undue Cambodian dependency on the U.S., the most interesting aspect of the CIP program is that the *riels* generated by sale of the U.S. commodities to importers go to pay the salaries of the Lon Nol army. Without the CIP program's subsidy to the defense budget, the government could not afford the war.

Politically, the American Embassy in Phnom Penh keeps

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a "low profile" by keeping down the number of its staff. But recently top U.S. officials have openly been involved in the day-to-day political decisions of the ailing president, Marshal Lon Nol. The chief benefactor of American lobbying efforts has been the arrogant but capable distant cousin of Sihanouk, Sirik Matak. Embassy officials have been trying to persuade Lon Nol to let Sirik Matak back in the government ever since he was toppled a year ago by student protests and the manipulations of the President's younger brother Lon Non. (I once asked a Western Ambassador in Phnom Penh why the Americans like Sirik Matak so much. "Oh, you know," he said, "he's more like them than the other Cambodians. When you go to his house the conversation is about travels abroad, international cuisine, that sort of thing. But at the Marshal's, all he wants to talk about is astrology and Buddhist philosophy.")

These efforts echo Vietnam, despite all the disclaimers about having learned from past mistakes. The Americans believe Sirik Matak is a "can-do" politican who will accomplish things their way. Sirik Matak can take over running the government while the ailing Lon Nol retreats further into mysticism and astrology. They seem to be unaware of—or discount—the public antipathy to Sirik Matak, feelings strong enough, most Cambodian journalists believe, to prevent him from ever being able to run the government.

Besides hoping to return Sirik Matak to a central position in the government, the Embassy has been lobbying heavily in recent months for Lon Nol to bring what the Embassy calls other members of the "opposition" into the government. Embassy officials say that broadening the government might push Cambodia closer to a ceasefire. In recent weeks, American efforts seem to have been temporarily successful as Lon Nol has formed a new ruling group which includes two of his bitterest opponents. But Cambodian politics has always had an ebb and flow quality about it with opposition members brought into the cabinet only to quit or be expelled six months later. But more important, few observers in Phnom Penh believe that the so called "opposition" figures the Americans have been pushing are any more likely to make a lasting compromise with the communists than Lon Nol. Like him, they are hardline anti-communists and participated in the coup against Sihanouk.

[THE TEETERING DOMINO]

The prospects for peace in Cambodia seem only to have receded with the signing of ceasefires in Vietnam and Laos. The Marshal rather fatuously proposes from time to time that the Khmer Rouge are welcome to come join his government as a way of stopping the fighting. For his part, Prince Sihanouk still regards himself as the legitimate head of state, and is working hard to smooth over differences with Khmer Rouge leaders in the field. Sihanouk, in fact, is the unknown in the current Cambodian equation. Most diplomats in Phnom Penh believe it is only a matter of time before the Lon Nol regime disintegrates completely, clearing the way for Sihanouk's return. Regardless of past Khmer Rouge hostilities toward Sihanouk, and the Russians' reservations because of his Peking sojourn, it seems likely that Moscow, Peking and Hanoi would support a new government dominated by the Khmer Rouge with Sihanouk as titular head. (Sihanouk himself has recently alluded to just such an arrangement to journalists in Peking). Among Cambodians there is increasing nostalgia for the past—even among intellectuals who welcomed the Lon Nol bandwagon at first. Things have reached such a state in Phnom Penh that even some American officials have been heard in private to speak wistfully of the good old days under Sihanouk.

It is remotely a possibility that America might acquiesce to Sihanouk's return, even though—ironically—any new government he forms will be considerably to the left of the earlier government the Americans found so inimical to their interests. But it is far more likely that the Nixon Administration will assume that because the Cambodian situation has not yet managed to awaken America's interest and outrage, this means that it has discovered a level of involvement that is politically acceptable to the public and which it can therefore maintain indefinitely.

But there are also signs that the Nixon Administration is digging itself even deeper into the type of situation LBJ discovered in Vietnam. The purpose of the original Cambodian incursion and the subsequent aid program, we were told in 1970, was "to protect our men who are in Vietnam, and to guarantee the continued success of our withdrawal and Vietnamization plan." Later, as U.S. troop strength declined, the Administration said we were conducting bombing raids at the request of the Cambodian government. With this statement, the U.S. appeared committed not just to Vietnamization, but to the survival of the Lon Nol regime. More ominous, however, was the recent statement by Defense Secretary Elliot Richardson which defined the bombing in Cambodia as a way of inducing the North Vietnamese to live up to the Paris accords.

Richardson's statement raises the possibility that Cambodia may continue to be a victim of Vietnam-style domino politics, and in an ironic double twist, that the future of the Vietnam peace accord may be affected by continued conflict in Cambodia. It was ominous in the face of repeated reports from the American Embassy in Phnom Penh that few North Vietnamese are still fighting with Khmer liberation forces. His later adamant reassertion that Cambodia is facing North Vietnamese aggressors raises the possibility that the Administration might use the continued conflict in Cambodia as an excuse to scrap the Paris accords. What might then be on the agenda for Cambodia, which has become the domino in-between? U.S.-bankrolled raids by Thai and South Vietnamese soldiers, as in Laos? Stepped up American military aid to save Lon Nol? Increasing civilian casualties, refugees and starvation?

As for the Cambodian liberation forces, they have little to lose by continuing to tighten the noose around Phnom Penh. While most observers in the Cambodian capital think the Cambodian communists have the strength to take the capital by force they believe they will not choose to do so because of the threat of U.S. bombing. Slow strangulation is more effective, especially if it also leads to the death of the Lon Nol government. "Phnom Penh is like a ripe fruit, waiting to fall," says Sihanouk in Peking. Like a teetering domino, is more like it. ■

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IS JERUSALEM BURNING?

by Paul Jacobs

The Fall of Jerusalem, by Abdullah Schleifer, Monthly Review Press, $7.50 (cloth) and $3.45 (paper).

The history of Jerusalem is a continuous chronicle of bloodshed, for no other city in the world has been fought over so bitterly by Jews, Christians and Moslems.

"The fall of Jerusalem took three days; the siege had been under way since 1917," writes Abdullah Schleifer in *The Fall of Jerusalem,* in this valuable but bound-to-be-considered "controversial" book.

Schleifer, born into a middle-class Jewish family in a Long Island suburb, was a New Left activist who converted in 1964 to Islam, changing his name from Marc to Abdullah. Now a devout Moslem, he has spent the years since then living and working within the Arab world, in East Jerusalem, Cairo, Amman and Beirut. Schleifer's book reflects his background, combining a Marxist approach with an Islamic cultural and religious view.

The book deals with a number of inextricably intertwined themes, each of them equally controversial, each of them equally laden with emotional distress. Almost half of the amply footnoted volume describes and analyzes the history and ultimate success of Zionism in achieving state power.

But Schleifer's historical analysis differs not only from the theses advanced by Zionist scholars, but also from those promulgated by traditional Arab historians: the principal focus of his attention is the emergence of the Palestinian Arabs and their relationships to the colonial powers, the Arab states, the Zionist forces and, finally, to Israel. The Palestinians have been victims, maintains Schleifer, either because of their own errors or because, until after the 1967 war, their real interests had been obscured by the rise of Pan-Arab nationalism.

Schleifer is sharply critical of Pan-Arabism's "limited moral perspective," its "narrow emotion, so easily spilling over into cruel and self-aggrandizing ambition," which made the Palestinian cause sound "more like a tasteless vendetta or personal grudge (or even a property squabble over some obscure orange groves) than a liberation struggle." But Schleifer is equally critical of those Palestinians who, today, present themselves "without any apparent program or alternative beyond 'revenge' (a neotribal Arab affectation as repugnant to the classic Islamic sensibility of the region as to Western humanism)." He insists that "The beginning of any genuine national revival rests upon the ability of men to honor relatively objective criteria, whether it involves immediate political profit or not. The inability of the Arabs to comprehend this concept has been one of the great self-defeating psychological facts of Middle Eastern life and has been mercilessly exploited by Israel."

The constant ability of the Zionist movement to utilize, for its own purposes, all kinds of political developments, especially active anti-Semitism, is a basic theme in *The Fall of Jerusalem,* beginning with the Balfour Declaration in 1917, and ending with the easy Israeli military victory over the Arab forces in 1967.

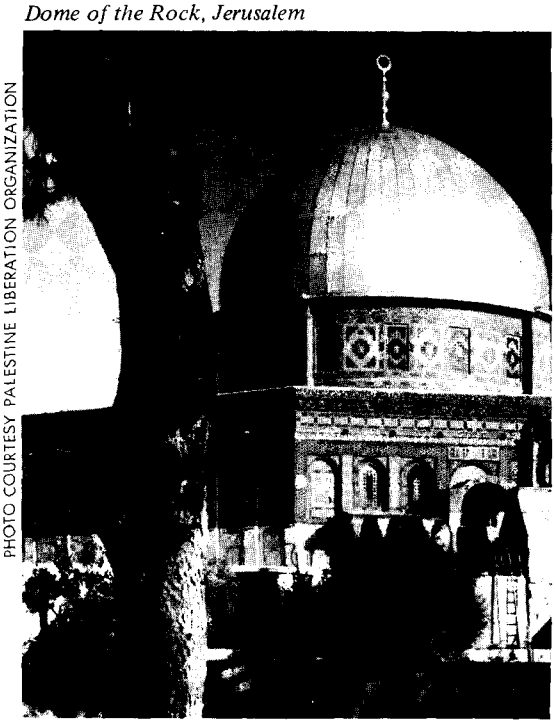
That victory took place because the Arab military organization was incredibly disorganized and totally unprepared for battle, except in its anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic rhetoric. In recent months, a sharp debate has developed within Israel as a result of statements by a number of Israeli generals who insist that, since 1948, Israel has not faced the threat of annihilation by any single Arab state or combination of states. And if Schleifer's detailed on-the-scene description of the battle for East Jerusalem is correct, the Israeli generals are accurate in their assessment.

The intellectual strength of Schleifer's book rests on the cogent analysis he makes of the political weaknesses of the Arab forces and the long range capabilities of the Israelis. In his conclusion, he points out that even—and perhaps especially—the regionalism advocated by the Israelis means the ultimate domination by Israel over much of the Arab world. And he is realistic in his pessimistic appraisal of the proposal, advanced by some Palestinian Arabs, for the creation of a "democratic Palestinian society open to all the Jews of Israel prepared to live with the Palestinian Muslims and Christians in a nonsectarian, nonracialist state that is in turn an integral part of the Arab nation."

If it is true, as Schleifer argues, that the struggle for Jerusalem is a "microcosm" of the entire Middle East conflict, then the future does not hold in it such a state: all of Jerusalem is now an Israeli Jewish city and it will remain so throughout the foreseeable future, especially if Palestinian Arab groups continue on their present course of self-destructive actions, substituting politics of the instant deed for the development of an integrated ideology and the tedious development of a constituency. The value of Schleifer's book is that it makes clear how and why both these realities came to be. ■

This review was commissioned by the Book Review section of the Sunday New York Times. *It was paid for but never published.*

Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem



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THE ALMANAC

by Derek Shearer

The women's movement may well have generated more organizations and more activities than any other social phenomenon of recent years. Unfortunately, I cannot in this short space put together a comprehensive listing of materials useful to people interested in women's liberation. At best, I can only mention good general sources which will lead to many other publications and organizations.

The Spokeswoman—an independent national monthly **newsletter of feminist news**—provides a wealth of information on the women's movement. It is nonsectarian and each issue is filled with news on women's organizations, conferences, job openings, political action, new books, articles, films, and so on. It is probably the best newsletter of its kind in the country today. Subscriptions cost $7 per year for individuals; $12 a year for institutions. (Write: The Spokeswoman, 5465 S. Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60615, Tel. (312) 363-2580).

The National Women's Political Caucus, which recently had its first convention in Houston, also publishes a regular **newsletter**. Subscriptions to the newsletter and at-large membership in NWPC cost $15 a year. (Write: National Women's Political Caucus, 1302 18th St., N.W., Room 703, Washington, D.C. 20036). Those interested in a more active role in NWPC should seek out the state and local chapters of the organization.

A third newsletter, the **Women's Studies Newsletter,** is put out four times a year by the Feminist Press, Box 334, Old Westbury, New York 11568. Subscriptions are $5 for individuals; $10 for institutions. The **Feminist Press** also publishes **books** and **pamphlets**, including a series of nonsexist children's books. Be sure to ask for their complete literature list.

Likewise, **KNOW, Inc.** (P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15221) publishes a fine selection of feminist books and pamphlets. Recently, the Washington *Post* commented favorably on their new book, **I'm Running Away From Home, But I'm Not Allowed To Cross The Street.** (about a woman trying to liberate herself). Request a free copy of their list of publications.

In addition, one particularly intriguing **pamphlet** has come to my attention, entitled **Witches, Midwives and Nurses—A History of Women Healers.** Copies cost $1 each for 10 or less; 60 cents each for orders of 10 or more. (Write: Glass Mountain Press, P.O. Box 238, Oyster Bay, N.Y. 11771).

There are also several women's movement bibliographies available. The **Women's History Library** publishes **directories of films, courses, research projects,** and the like. They also maintain a microfilm library of various women's publications. For their publications list and for information about microfilms send $1 to 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, Ca. 94708. (N.B. They desperately need volunteers and members.)

The Feminist Studies Program at the **Cambridge-Goddard Graduate School for Social Change** (5 Upland Rd., Cambridge, Mass. 02140) has published two excellent bibliographies, **Women and Psychology** (copies 40 cents each) and **Women and Literature** (75 cents each). Cambridge-Goddard offers an accredited **M.A. degree in feminist studies** and in such fields as political economy and Third World studies. If you're interested in the program, write for their course catalog and application blanks. (Applications for the fall program should be submitted before July 1.)

Last year, a bibliography of **films** on and about women was prepared by Janice Mendenhall for a "Federal Women's Day" program. Since then, it has been updated. Write for **"Films on the Women's Movement"** to Ms. Mendenhall at General Services Administration, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20405.

As for feminist magazines and newspapers, the range is truly impressive, and I can only mention a few examples here.

Women—A Journal of Liberation is a highly respected women's movement publication. It appears quarterly, and subscriptions cost $4 a year to individuals; $5 in Canada; and $6 for institutions. In the past it has published excellent special issues on women's culture, women and politics, and women and work. (Write: 3028 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218)

The oldest, most respected feminist literary magazine is **Aphra**, which was reviewed by Elizabeth Fishel in last month's RAMPARTS. Subscriptions cost $4.50 a year (Write: Box 273, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014).

Of more specialized interest is the **Women's Rights Law Reporter.** Individuals can subscribe for six issues at $15; libraries must pay the higher rate of $28. (Write: Women's Rights Law Reporter, 180 University Ave., Newark, N.J. 07102).

Two women's newspapers are worthy of special mention here: **Majority Report** ($3 a year, 89-91, 171st St., Jamaica, New York 11432) and **Off Our Backs** ($5 a year, Room 1013, 1346 Connecticut Ave., Washington, D.C. 20036). Both are well written and have a long and respectable track record.

Ain't I A Woman ($5 a year, P.O. Box 1169, Iowa City, Iowa 52240) is a feminist newspaper put out by a collective of seven gay women. **The Ladder** ($7.50 a year, P.O. Box 5025, Washington Station, Reno, Nevada 89503) is a bi-monthly magazine published by and for lesbians. Both enjoy the high regard of women active in the movement.

A new newspaper called **Women & Art** covers organizing, conferences, exhibits and other matters of interest to women with an artistic bent. Subscriptions cost $2. (Write: Women & Art, 89 East Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10022).

Finally, **Motive**, a very fine church magazine, published a **special issue** in 1972 on **Lesbianism and Feminism.** Editorial responsibility for the issue was assumed by the **Furies**, a collective of 12 lesbians in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, **Motive** has since folded, but copies of the **Lesbian Feminist Issue** are still available at $1 for individual copies, 75 cents each in bulk orders of 25 or more. (Write: Motive Magazine, G.P.O. Box 1677, New York, N.Y. 10003). ■

News of political work, including publications, films, slide shows, etc., should be addressed to Derek Shearer, RAMPARTS magazine, 2054 University Ave., Berkeley, California 94704.

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MYSTIC POLITICS

(From page 29)

reality. Just at that moment the phone rang. It was, by no mere coincidence, that woman. She asked him to come to her apartment, not far away. Davis dressed and went to her; when he arrived, she was in a yogic prayer position, her palms together in the "namaste" gesture, her head lowered and her eyes closed. Silence. Then, she spoke as in a trance: "All your sins are forgiven. You go for all of us."

The next day Davis was off to Paris to see Madame Binh, but at the airport he met an old friend—from the May Day organization that directed the demonstrations in Washington in 1971—who had become a devotee of the Guru Maharaj Ji. In the course of a transatlantic conversation with the friend and his companions, Davis was given an airplane ticket to India. He did stop in Paris, saw Madame Binh, found her—of course—"blissed out," and flew off to India. After several ambiguous encounters with the Guru Maharaj Ji and His entourage, Davis found himself holed up with the young God Himself in some Himalayan retreat, where one day he received "the Knowledge" in a blinding transcendent experience that seems to be the sum and substance of the Satguru's theology. The other several days were spent discussing the bureaucratic and organizational development of the Divine Light Mission and the now-information Divine United Organization. Davis will probably direct the DUO; he has just been appointed vice president in charge of the Divine Light Mission.

"I was impressed by the fact that an organization like this could exist worldwide," Davis said in an interview not long ago, "and that I would have so little consciousness of it. The strength of the organization is just absolutely remarkable. It's not just a spiritual strength, either. The Guru Maharaj Ji has 5,000 mahatmas [disciples with direct experience of "the Knowledge"]. Most of them are based in India, but increasingly they're learning English and other languages and are traveling to other nations. He's in every continent now except for the Socialist countries, and He announced that next year He's going to Russia and the year after that He's going to China and by 1975 everyone on the planet will know that He's here.

"In the United States there are now 150 centers oriented around the Guru Maharaj Ji. They're all hooked up with Telex machines and WATS lines. Next year Guru Maharaj Ji is going to build, probably in California, a city that will use all the advance methods of technology to insure that the air is pollution-free, cars will be run on electricity instead of gasoline. It will be an architectural wonder, and it will be—according to Him—a concrete demonstration of what it means to have Heaven on Earth. When you see the organization that He's assembled in two and a half years and you see the forces that are coming together for this city, for a huge festival in the Houston Astrodome next fall, which is going to launch the Divine United Organization—you realize that there is an incredibly serious force here at work that really means to have people roll up their sleeves and get down to work with the problems of this material world. I think the combination of a politics and a spirit joined together in one form led by God Itself is a very far-out vision."

The social organization of the Divine Light Mission, the religion and the ashrams (the centers where people work, live and pray) has a lot in common with the administration of New Left offices, activities and project houses. There's a certain warmth and good feeling in the ashrams that has not been around the "straight male Left" for many years, although some feminist and gay projects have experienced similar relationships. In the Guru Maharaj Ji's ashrams there is a "house mother" who cooks, washes up, irons clothes and serves the food. The heavies are, of course, all men. According to Davis, consciousness of sex roles is still, regrettably, low among the Guru Maharaj Ji's devotees because of their own political backgrounds, the Indian influence, and such factors. But in any case it doesn't matter. "Are you oppressed as a woman in the ashram?" Davis asked the "house mother" of a Manhattan ashram as she was serving up our health-food lunch. "Oh no," she laughed gently. "We all serve the Guru Maharaj Ji."

The playful 15-year-old Satguru (Perfect Master, or Avatar) prophesizes global apocalypse, although how good or bad it turns out depends on the extension of His teaching and the universal acceptance of "the Knowledge." Politics as Rennie Davis knew it has no function; Davis's own decade-long involvement in the Movement was simply "preparation" for his organizational role as "Rajdut," or Messenger of God, or Divine Organizer (the Hindi word was the brand name on the Divine Motorcycle, which the Guru Maharaj Ji let Davis ride in India; he took it as a symbol of his new position *vis-à-vis* the Satguru).

[SALLY KEMPTON AND THE ARICANS]

A few days after I saw Rennie Davis in the ashram in New York City, I visited Sally Kempton in the Arica quarters on the ocean-front in Los Angeles. Kempton is a rather well-established writer who helped organize the Radical Feminists in New York and generally identified with radical, left and women's movements in the '60s. A nexus of personal and professional circumstances, some friendships with people enjoying enlightenment trips, and a traumatic death in her family prepared her for the Arica course, a systematic body of physical, psychological and meditative disciplines developed by a Bolivian intellectual named Oscar Ichazo.

For what it's worth in the world of professions and performance, Kempton is considered a remarkably intelligent and sensitive writer; perhaps, as an old SDS heavy told me recently, "the smartest one of us all." She was not herself a leader of the male left, but her articles (in the *Village Voice* and *Esquire*) and organizing activities in radical feminism were important to the development of the women's movement. I know her well; she spent a lot of time at the farm commune in Vermont where I once lived, and I was always aware of the ongoing struggle in her consciousness between contending values of intellectual performance and emotional integrity: in simpler (and perhaps too simplistic) terms, work against love. It was a kind of struggle I found replicated in myself, in many other radical men, and in a few women. I'm not surprised to see such women in such a place as Oscar Ichazo's Arica.

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"Oscar," who is in his 40's, learned various mystical disciplines and Eastern martial techniques at an early age, and developed a more or less coherent body of eclectic mysticism and psychotherapy which he taught to a small number of students/patients/followers in the city of Arica, in Chile where he settled. Claudio Naranjo, the Berkeley post-Beat, proto-Hip, trans-Esalen therapist, heard of Oscar's work with psychiatric patients, and in time sent several dozen Big Sur types and arty freaks to Chile to take the long course that Oscar had worked up. They returned to America a little less than a year later, and at Oscar's urging and direction set up an Arica Institute in New York City. Ads in the *New York Times* and elsewhere announced the $3,000, three-month course to be given in a big hotel on Central Park South. But the expected hordes of corporate executives and ruling-class representatives did not sign up to save themselves and America, and the scale of the operation was quickly reduced in price, length of training, and expectations for universal salvation. It did, however, attract a number of show-biz and literary types who underwent serious psycho-cosmic traumas and emerged somewhat more "awake" than they had been previously. Oscar's technique is *sui generis,* but generally employs elements of Gestalt, Sufi, Yoga, Zen, T'ai Chi and other disciplines to achieve high consciousness, self-awareness and joyful social relations.

The atmosphere in the Arica beach house was comradely and communal, as it had been in the Guru Maharaj Ji ashram. The Aricans were different in their hip sophistication and their trippy irony; the Divine Light devotees were single-minded and narrowly "blissed out," I thought. Arica, of course, is not a religion and Oscar is not God, nor a god, but a very high, awake and wise teacher with an apocalyptic vision of the world and a slightly less than obsessive proselytizing instinct. Sally Kempton claims that women's caucuses within the various semi-autonomous Arica schools around the country have promoted sexual egalitarianism in the once male-dominated outfit, and that interpersonal relations between members of an Arica community are "worked" more successfully by Oscar's techniques than with the methods of political and emotional struggle we all used in our late communes and collectives.

Both the Divine Light Mission and Arica involve communities of the faithful. After receiving "the Knowledge" or Waking Up, students or devotees of both systems tend to find work and pursue lives within the organizational structure. Aricans are busily finding students for the various courses ($600 for the popular 40-day "Open Path" session); Divine Missionaries are organizing the Houston rally, building the Divine City of Peace near Santa Barbara, running the slick magazine *And It Is Divine,* and operating the Divine Sales business that helps support the entire organization. (Both movements rely on the financial kindness of rich and super-rich devotees.)

There is not much agreement, trust or friendship between followers of the various disciplines and religions. Often exclusive claims of divinity prohibit the sharing of work; Rennie Davis says that all other cults, as well as political organizations, have "the blind leading the blind," because the Guru Maharaj Ji is God in human form. Aricans think that the strict belief system of the Guru Maharaj Ji is anti-enlightening. Then again, I've heard other unorganized students of yoga and Zen call Arica "spiritual fascism" under Oscar's authoritarian dictatorship and the tyranny of mental discipline, intellectual categories and cultish regulations. "We're not 'Arica robots,'" Sally Kempton insisted, "even though we all have the same haircut."

The organizations differ, too, in their relation to "social" work, to changing conditions in the world of war, racism, poverty, disease, oppression, revolution—"politics." The most cosmic cults seem to choose a reality in which all those elements are simply not at issue. Others see "problems" solved by the spread of one or another Good Word, a Divine Zap, or whatever brand of Enlightenment is being marketed. "There are many realities, but there is also reality," a still-political semi-yogi cautioned me once.

It's too early to draw hard psycho-historical conclusions about the movement of personnel from politics to mysticism; and the art of psycho-history is underdeveloped at best. Surely a brief glimpse at Rennie Davis or Sally Kempton, for instance, provides only the roughest sketches for a psychological interpretation of the phenomenon.

Of course, there are other examples. Greg Calvert, a former SDS national secretary in the "participatory democracy" days, has been seriously into Sufism and Gestalt Therapy. Jerry Rubin has been experimenting, as he says, "with anything that has claims in that direction," and is especially fond of Bioenergetics, EST and Gestalt Therapy. I encountered Rubin recently and found him fairly glowing with mellow vibes. He seemed both physically and interpersonally "looser" than I had ever remembered him. He said he was in a wonderful state of mind.

Another Movement man I knew well from the '60s, a radical filmmaker, theoretician and organizer, has been in and out of a Tibetan Buddhist center. His meditative phase came after the breakup of his political collective and his rural commune. He had been under intense criticism by women and other men in his group for chauvinism, authoritarianism, insensitivity to the emotional needs of others, blindess to the effects of his behavior on his comrades and companions.

The harsh criticism was painful, and although he tried to disregard some of the ways his friends' anger was expressed, he could not disregard it all. He felt imperatives for a "change of consciousness," which might be political, psychological or transcendental. He felt obliged to try on all three levels, but I always had the feeling that he found it most convenient to focus on the cosmic principle as the path to the others.

Finally, a former writer, now in his early '30s, spent the last year of the '60s shuttling back and forth between rather exotic radical adventures (we did a lot of spray painting that year) and Zen meditation sessions. I think he was genuinely open to proof of the validity of either way as the course that would give meaning to his life, rationalize what seemed like an anomolous nuclear family situation (wife and two children, house in a suburban district), and take him out of the

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world of cynical cycles of hope and emptiness. The political way, at last, offered him very little support. The Zen way was much more sure. When I last saw him, he was living in a Maine Zen community, building a house and workshop, and preparing to spend eight-hour-long sessions meditating during the winter, while his wife tended the kids at home.

[WHEN PROPHECY FAILS]

I'm not entirely sure what shades of a sensibility or patterns of consciousness all the cults share, and what they find antagonistic in each other. But there are some obvious springs which feed them all, and perhaps some common explanations for the overall phenomenon that can be found:

1. The "failure" of revolution, according to the hyperboles employed by the political movements of the late '60s, freaked out the people who had set their life-clocks according to the apocalyptic timetable. What happens "when prophecy fails?" In a study (under that title) of an end-of-the-world cult of the '50s, the sociologists Festinger, Riecken and Schachter saw that the moment of disconfirmation—the day that the world does *not* end—creates extreme dissonance in the minds of those whose belief systems are based on the fulfillment of the prophecy. In other words, it becomes positively painful to experience reality rubbing against belief. To decrease the aching dissonance between reality and their understanding of it, people may change their belief systems, rationalize reality by twists in logic or facts, or organize more support for the erring belief system.

The un-success of rapid, radical political change in America; the re-election of Nixon; the "winding down" of the war in Indochina without the unconditional surrender of the Pentagon—all that created an amount of dissonance (not to mention despair) among those who had invested the most in the expectation of a quick victory. Everyone has a way of blunting that dissonance: and one of them is the acceptance of a new belief system that either *confirms* the success of the left in new terms, or *invents* drastically new terms. That is, you can say that the American radical anti-war movement and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam have won the war in Indochina—or you can say that radical politics is irrelevant and God is where it's at. Or, as in the example of Rennie Davis, you can say both.

2. The pressure many men feel, from external and internal sources, to "open up" emotionally, lower their intellectual defense, and relate to other men and women in a spontaneous, sensual, non-competitive way is widely experienced and largely unheeded. In organizations, communes and social groups, men have been unable to get it together themselves, while women have usually had the opposite experience. But the pressures are real and cannot be entirely disregarded. The political organizations and projects surviving into the '70s have all been traumatized by the crisis of sex roles, and the outcome of the resulting struggles is usually dissolution of the group—or male-dominated reaction. The Revolutionary Union, for example, has "dealt" with liberation efforts of women and homosexuals by retreating to a Stalinoid position that totally rejects the liberating developments in sexual politics of the last several years.

Some men (again, I have to concentrate on those in the young, white middle class) understand that they should find a way from their conscious behavior into their unconscious mind, to integrate action and feeling, detach their egos from matters and materials, break the barriers between intellect and emotion. By no means we know is that easy to do. "Consciousness raising" groups, on the joint model of Red Guard and radical feminist struggle sessions, are threatening, limited and long. Traditional psychotherapy is expensive, somewhat discredited or tainted in the political and youth culture, and perhaps a bit too German and Jewish to be exotic anymore. But mysticism and spiritualism provides several escapes from those pressures on and in men. It offers the alternative of an altered cosmic consciousness to a changed unconscious—a new reality of self rather than a new relationship with self. Some wise and with-it gurus, philosophers and therapists are trying to put the two ways together, to blend the Freudian and the Buddha nature. Claudio Naranjo—the Arica link between Berkeley and Chile—mixes existential and Gestalt therapy with Sufi and other Oriental mysticism. Oscar Ichazo's techniques, too, draw from the various psychiatric and spiritualist wells.

But most of the organized cults I've encountered remain strongly male-dominated. At least, the terms of the religion of therapy are set by men: precisely to deal, by evasion or attack, with those male problems of the mind/emotion, conscious/unconscious split. My impression is that many of the women who are heavily involved in that kind of work—in Arica or Sufi, for example—also see their personal crisis in that "male-defined" way of a blockage between the conscious and the unconscious. It's not surprising that mysticism in America is a white and middle-class trip; and when one thinks about it, it is not surprising that it's essentially a male trip, too.

3. In an analogous way, mysticism is a kind of back door or side window to the non-rational side of humans. Western rationalism is undergoing another wave in the series of assaults that mark the intellectual history of this century. There is, after all, that tradition of Western intellectuals seeking philosophic counterweights to Reason and Science, materialism and logic. What's so paradoxical is that many of the new mystical cults outdo Western philosophies in their excessive categorization of psychic and cosmic states. Arica, for example, presents trainees with endless lists of ego states, levels of consciousness, physiognomic points for attention, and so on. Ultimately, an Arican assured me, the categories can be internalized by the trainee.

4. The quest for peace-of-mind encouraged the development of psychiatric schools and psychological sects throughout the 20th century, and there has been an increasing spill-over into peace-of-brain techniques and peace-of-soul ideologies. Moral Re-Armament, Positive Thinking and Dianetics/Scientology have their hip analogues in EST, Silva Mind Control, Biofeedbackery, and the various occult systems. A Gestalt theoretician writes, "Freud's famous statement, 'Much has been accomplished if we can change

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neurotic misery into common unhappiness,' is no longer sufficient . . . Now we use words such as enhancement, intimacy, actualization, creativity, ecstasy, and transcendence to describe what we wish for ourselves and others. [These] theories . . . offer as the alternative to misery, not unhappiness, but joy."

For the middle class of Americans, the world offers the promise and the expectation of joy as it does the abundance of material goods, a job when needed, and interesting ways to fill up a day. The fact that most people somehow don't get the joy that's coming to them is a source of unending perplexity—and the impetus for the development of techniques, organizations and corporations to make good on the promises. The politics of joy having failed, perhaps the mystique of joy should be explored.

5. The half-true, half-mythic sense of "participation" and communitarianism that the New Left was supposed to achieve is still a relevant dream in much of the old new culture. It has been said that Rennie Davis found the Satguru in his never-ending search for the participatory democratic spirit that was supposed to infuse the ERAP organizing projects that he developed and directed. In fact, much of the nostalgia is both mistaken and misplaced: Davis and a few other early New Left men manipulated some fuzzy notions of participatory democracy and communalism for rather standard organizational and personally political ends. Still, the myth survives, and it is probably true that some people look for its realization in one or another mystery house or magical project.

6. At last, there is the gnawing notion some of us have that somewhere out there humanity is on the verge of an evolutionary leap forward, a quantum jump beyond what we now understand as "humanness" into some as yet un-understood mode of higher being. Both the Divine Light people and Aricans talk about *biological* changes that are occurring to raise and change the quality of being human. Rennie Davis says that *homo sapiens* is itself the "missing link" between what is now and what will be—soon. The message is that we do not have to wait out some Darwinian infinity for this next evolutionary stage. Aricans say that they have achieved a "one body" state among members of an Arica living and working unit.

Central to all these theories is that single, essential mystical experience, the famous insight into the "oneness" of the universe, the Acid test, the yogic perfection: the "knowledge" that all the energy and all matter in the universe are somehow infinite and undifferentiated except in our minds.

"Men's curiosity searches past and future
And clings to that dimension,"

Eliot says near the end of that *Dry Salvages* passage;

"But to apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time, is an occupation for the saint—
No occupation either, but something given
And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,
Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender.
For most of us, there is only the unattended
Moment, the moment in and out of time,
The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,
The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning
Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply
That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
While the music lasts. These are only hints and guesses,
Hints followed by guesses; and the rest
Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action." ■

MAHARAJ JI

(From page 35)

just flew away in all directions—they left! And I just said, 'I really don't know what's going on here, I just really don't know.' " That, it turned out, was the crucial point—to admit that you haven't the faintest idea what's happening; to literally lose your mind and the control it has over your soul and let the Word of the Perfect Master take over.

"For the first time," says Rennie, "I felt completely open. And the buzz I was feeling was just unbelievable. I just surrendered my mind completely to Guru Maharaj Ji and said 'No more—from here on out *you* do the thinking and I'll do the listening.' " Boom Zap Thwang. At that instant Rennie Davis abandoned all pretensions to what we know as rational human behavior and donated his mind to the divine prodigy, where it reposes to this day and, Rennie knows, for the rest of his cosmic existence—in other words, for all eternity.

[BLISS WITH A CAPITAL B]

Although he himself has foresworn thinking, he does offer the rest of us a scientific explanation for all this Bliss and Knowledge. "Scientists are just discovering that the Pineal Gland is light-receptive, and that the Pineal Gland is sort of the thing that directs the flow of the brain. Guru Maharaj Ji shows us how to discover this gland, and how to use this light so that we can become a part of Him. And this light shows us the Word, and if we can experience the Word, we'll be saved, no matter what else happens to us." As it turns out, the Word has arrived not a moment too soon, for the Guru Maharaj Ji also predicts, in Rennie's words, "a great wash will sweep the planet. Those who have the Word will be saved, and those who don't will not pass through this time.

"That's why He's come at this point in history. He will provide the opportunity to make His Knowledge available to every human being on the planet. If people will just listen to what He is saying, and come to Him with an open mind, He will give them the divine Truth which will not only transform this planet to heaven on earth, but will bring eternal happiness and bliss to everyone on it. And I mean Bliss with a capital 'B.' "

Now some might find this rather incredible, if not ridiculous. To be sure, Rennie Davis has been given to exaggeration before. For example, he confidently predicted that Mayday would shut down Washington, quite literally bring it to a halt. But while such a statement might be excused as good PR, it is quite something again to say that in two years' time, Mao Tse-tung will bow down and worship a 15-year-

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old child.

"Of course it is," smiled Rennie. "And it is Divine. You see, we can't possibly know the Will of God—only He knows that and we are nothing but His humble servants. He tells us what to say and do, and I'm just repeating what He has told me. What He's saying is that this year He will give everyone the chance to find out who they really are. Of course that doesn't mean everyone will take Him up on it.

"You know," he went on, "I still can't believe it. That's the thing about this Knowledge—you just cannot believe it's happened to you. Guru Maharaj Ji is the culmination of every Perfect Master that preceded him—Buddha, Jesus, Krishna, all wrapped up in this fat little bundle of human flesh."

In fact, Rennie's admiration for the Perfect Master and His family knows no bounds. All members of the family, he says, are "some aspect of the Maharaj Ji's divinity." And as for Bal Bhagwan Ji, "personally, I think he's Jesus Christ returned to Earth and that this time he's brought his father with him." With such faith, he has no difficulty explaining what might appear as a blatant contradiction, if not an outright hypocrisy. The Guru Maharaj Ji, for example, has a marked weakness for expensive cars, motorcycles, and airplanes, and his mother rarely appears in public without diamonds. Who is this Perfect Master that He can pass himself off as a rich communist in a country where millions are starving?

"Last time," Rennie explains, "the Perfect Master came, He was dressed in rags and nobody believed him. This time, He's come back as a king and said, 'Pow—dig this, I'm here everybody and you can't miss me this time.' Besides, the material things He has are all just toys that He uses to make people realize how ludicrous money is. People are constantly laying all those gifts on Him—remember, even Christ let Mary Magdalene annoint Him with precious oils, it's the same kind of thing. And you just cannot look at Guru Maharaj Ji in the human form with any of His surroundings. He's challenging us to go beyond that—that's why He looks so ridiculous and why He surrounds himself with materialism—it's *lila*. Like right now He's taking apart his Rolls engine and re-building it so He can understand it and then build an engine that will enable Him to beat the world's land speed record. After all, He's King of the Yippies.

"And it's the whole duality thing of our egos, fundamentally, rather than capitalism, fundamentally. Eliminate that duality and you eliminate capitalism, sexism, racism—everything. Guru Maharaj Ji is simply saying 'accept me and let's get it on and start to rebuild this planet.' "

Looking into his clear brown eyes, I suddenly felt like a caveman trying to communicate with a gorilla: all the instincts were there, but there was a genetic time warp between my grunts and his. Perhaps sensing my incredulity, he reassured me with a pat on the knee. "It's good you're freaked out, Ken. That's the first step. All I'm saying is go check it out."

And so, in late April, I made my way to Denver where the Divine Light Mission of America was holding its second annual national gathering of ashram secretaries.

Rennie Davis

[CHECKING IT OUT]

Downtown Denver's 16th Street is a Disneyesque phantasmagoria of counterculture stereotypes, porn shops and exotic transplants melding into a surreal chimera of methedrine hustle. Sixteen-year-old longhairs panhandle the fat businessmen peeping at 60-second snatches of pubic fantasy for two bits. Hare Krishnas jangle their incessant tambourines alongside Jesus freaks preaching from invisible soapboxes. Women waddle by decorated as penguins with long rosaries swinging in synch to each step.

The neon red demon of Orange Julius marks the site of Denver's Kitteridge Building. Upstairs the North American headquarters of the Divine Light Mission occupies four floors. Well-scrubbed *premies* dash about—their innocence a rude contrast to their environment. A few blocks away sits the national ashram, where I arrived having driven for 24 hours stuffed into a car with two ashram secretaries. My head was still zinging from the non-stop *satsang* and the whirl of slot machines, when who should walk up the steps but the *perfect* person to give us knowledge (small "k") about the national operation: Joan Apter, 26, National Promotions Director for the DLM.

Rennie Davis had told me in San Francisco that "starting now, we're going to make the revolution professionally." Joan Apter's very presence mirrors his prediction. She told the same life story that I would hear again and again that weekend with almost suspicious redundance.

"I quit school as a junior and travelled for three years. I'd been into acting and the arts, never much religion. I started school with lots of optimism which faded into boredom. And I was very unhappy. I left America knowing something was wrong, wanting to discover what it was and how to solve it. Then I found myself in India, as far north as I could go without entering China, which was impossible. I'd

Joan Apter

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come to the point in my mind where I didn't know where else to turn. I'd tried everything I could come up with but each would finish up as a dead-end road. There are limits to the alternatives—even the human mind has a point where that limit is reached. I was emotionally drained and there was nothing to be optimistic about—I felt that whatever it was that gives happiness didn't exist. Life was all a joke and the joke was on me. Basically I wanted very simple things, like a child, and all the contradictions were making me more unnatural and unchildlike.

"It was at this point that I discovered Maharaj Ji, and the holy family took me in. It's said that when a person has been refused and rejected by the rest of the world, when everything else has left you behind, that's when you're ready for the Perfect Master. I received so much patience, love and revelation into a new type of life of which I knew nothing. Layer by layer my negativism started to disappear."

Returning to America, she joined two other *premies* and began the first U.S. ashram. "First I'd hooked up with this *premie* in West Virginia, and he and I began giving each other lots of *satsang.* Then there was this man in a mental institution in Maryland who wanted *satsang,* and I began giving it to him. But the staff told me, 'Hey, we need this Knowledge as much as the patients do—we don't know if we're crazy or they are most of the time,' so I gave them *satsang* too. It was *perfect* —if anyone belonged in a mental institution before I met Guru Maharaj Ji, I did, only there were none in India. So by His Grace I was saved, and now I was allowed to spread some of His Grace to others. Then I got a call from another incredible *premie* in L.A. who gave me a plane ticket and we started the first American ashram." That was but two years ago. Today the Divine Light Mission boasts 35 ashrams, with scores of attendant "*premie* houses" and related communities of devotees. Not only has the movement grown rapidly, but its adherents are convinced it won't peak and fizzle out.

"The difference," says Joan Apter, "is that we have a living master, a living example to relate to. Not a past theory or doctrine, but a living guide. Everything is now—there is no past or future. And from our practical experience we know we have nothing to worry about—we'll never go wrong because we have His Divine Grace to guide us. This is no wax banana."

Though her belief is strong, she was not so quick as Rennie to assert that Guru Maharaj Ji is God. "He says He's just a humble servant. But He gives you indications of who He is. He tells us that if a man is very clever, 'I only have to beckon to him with my little finger and he will come. But if a man is not clever I must say put your eyes toward me, put your head toward me, put your left foot in front of your right foot and walk.' In 1970 when He made his first public appearance He said 'I have come with more power than ever before. Surrender your reins to me and I will give you salvation. I'm feeling power, so much power, but you must come to me to receive what I can give you.' So there are lots of indications but it's like Jesus wouldn't answer Pilate when asked if He were the Messiah—'You say,' He said."

I inquired about Rennie's assertion that the Satguru was the reincarnation of all previous Perfect Masters. "Perfect Masters are not the reincarnation of each other. Buddha was not the reincarnation of Krishna. Perfect Masters are the reincarnation of perfection." Evidently, Rennie has not yet honed his zeal to the fine edge of a Joan Apter. Hers is a spit-'n'-polish ecumenicalism.

Rennie had told me that since America was the darkest place on the planet, it would accept Maharaj Ji first. I inquired then whether Eastern Europe—as the second darkest place—might be in line for a Soul Rush '74. No, said Joan Apter. "There is no great contradiction between their philosophy and that of Guru Maharaj Ji. The Russians don't deny God—they deny religion, and why shouldn't they? There is an incredible amount of activity in Czechoslovakia, for instance—our ashram there is doing amazing things. Basically, we have no philosophical differences with anybody. Everybody's just after happiness. But the Knowledge is universal. It's perfect communism. Also perfect democracy—perfect everything." Perfect fascism? I inquired. "Yes, perfect fascism, perfect totalitarianism—every system was created for a good reason." The Knowledge, it seems, is all things to all people.

Most important, it is the key to immortality. "After you've received Knowledge, it's like you've roasted your seeds and can't re-plant them. After death there are two courses—liberation or devotion, if you've received Knowledge. Devotion means that you get another body to come back and help others receive Knowledge—people think that liberation is the most important thing, but it's not. The attachment to that energy which will bring the whole universe to liberation is most important. But if a person decides against devotion and simply wants liberation, then he'll simply merge without life and stay merged without life—no form, no human body. At death, whatever one wants is what the next life will be for him." This only applies, however, to those who have received Knowledge. The rest are consigned to a bestial future at best. "They take another, lower form than a human body: an animal form. If a mother at death is thinking of her children, if that's the single most important thing to her, she might come back as a pig and have lots of piglets. There are 8.6 million forms that energy can take, and the highest one is the human body. But the odds against actually getting one are immense. And it is only through that body that Knowledge can be received."

[THE HOLY FAMILY]

The Guru Maharaj Ji himself emerged in human form some 15 years ago. Like other Indians, he was given two names at birth: Pratap Singh Rawat, and Balyogeshwar.

When he was born, his father, Shri Hans Ji Maharaj, also a Perfect Master and the actual founder of the Divine Light Mission, exulted that the "Perfect Master has finally come who will be able to do the fullness for which he has come. He is so great I can but prostrate myself in front of him." Shri Hans died when Balyogeshwar was eight years old. When he was 13, he made his first public appearance to proclaim his mission in front of a million people. He now claims five million followers in India, and the Indian parliament includes numerous supporters and detractors. Many of his converts

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Diana Stone

come from the untouchable caste; his adherents cite this to back up their claim that he is doing more than anyone in India to eliminate the caste system.

In 1971 he made his first Western appearance at a pop festival in Glastonbury, England. There he stunned the promoters and the crowd by driving up in a white Rolls Royce, and delivering *satsang* for a full 5 minutes before the power was cut on the microphone. In 1972, he ventured across the Atlantic to the United States and held his first American Guru Puja—Guru Worship—festival in the mountains of Colorado. More than 2,000 converts emerged from that event. This year, he plans to take the country by storm with a three-part media program ("Who is Guru Maharaj Ji"; "Guru Maharaj Ji is Here"; "The Messiah Has Come") culminating in a three-day celebration at the Houston Astrodome. The program—entitled Soul Rush '73—is set to begin on November 9, Shri Hans Ji Maharaj's birthday. The *premies* flatly predict they will fill the stadium with more than 60,000 disciples, and they plan to provide free food for the multitude. In addition, they will have exhibits which will portray cosmic consciousness through the centuries, from the most ancient mystic arts to the most recent para-psychological discoveries.

The Holy Family includes Maharaj Ji, his three brothers—Bal Bhagwa Ji, 21; Bhole Ji, 19; and Raja Ji, 17—and his Divine Mother Shri Mata Ji. Merely to be in their presence is considered a sacred event called *darshan*. Mata Ji has made several appearances in the U.S., though mostly she remains at the home ashram in Prem Nagar, where she welcomes thousands of visitors every month. Bhole Ji and Raja Ji are presently students in London. Bhole Ji is reportedly planning to launch a 42-piece band, replete with an entire horn, string and choir section.

Diana Stone, 26, is a very special *premie* who has experienced much *darshan*. Her father was in the diplomatic corps, and she has been all over the world and majored in psychology in college. While her father was acting ambassador to India, she first discovered the Holy Family and received Knowledge. She reflects an innate warmth and intelligence that attracts immediate attention. She describes her leader as "the true dispeller of darkness and revealer of light." Rennie and many other *premies* had assured me that the Satguru was God Himself. Diana Stone went beyond them, saying that Maharaj Ji is "greater than God—He is the Guru. Without the Guru, you cannot receive God . . . God is energy, infinite and omnipotent. Guru Maharaj Ji enables us to realize that energy and take full advantage of it. It's like there is the knowledge which is the water, and the Guru is the cup with which to drink the water and ingest the knowledge." Why not drink from the faucet? "Impossible. The mind, the ego, has stopped us from even realizing we're thirsty."

[INSTANT DARSHAN]

As I was talking to Diana, an undercurrent of low-key hysteria swept the ashram: Bal Bhagwan Ji himself was going to put in an appearance at the conference. *Premies* had been hinting at it all weekend, but divine impulse is unpredictable. Diana Stone promised she would ask that I be allowed to interview him, as did Joan Apter. As the moment drew closer when he would actually walk through the door (without, by the way, removing his shoes—divine privilege has its compensations), the frenzy approached delirium. *Premies* clutched moist handkerchiefs in one hand to dry their eyes while, with the other, they madly sprayed air-freshener on everything and everyone in sight. Garlands of flowers appeared magically, people jockeyed for position around the foyer to get a little hit of *darshan* as Bal Bhagwan Ji walked up to this third floor sanctum sanctorum, reserved exclusively for visiting members of the Holy Family. I was allowed a ringside seat, and I must admit I was more than a little blissed out amidst the heavenly hoopla; who knows but that just the sight of such splendor might give me some of the fabled white light of Knowledge that heretofore I had only approached with nitrous oxide in my dentist's chair. Fully primed, I watched the door fly open, and a slight figure resembling a young Thomas Dewey dashed upstairs faster than a rat fleeing a cat. Halfway up he paused, glanced over his shoulder, and was off like a shot again.

Bal Bhagwan Ji

As it turned out, that fleeting glimpse of divinity was all I was to be allowed. Bal Bhagwan Ji would not see me. When I found out that he spent three hours the next day playing with a ouija board, I was furious. My protests got me nowhere, however, and when I telephoned Rennie Davis for some divine intercession on my behalf, he only laughed at my frustration. "This is a test, a little *lila,* Ken, so don't worry. Besides it may have nothing to do with who you are now, but who you were in a past lifetime—Bal Bhagwan Ji sees those things, you know." You cannot know true frustration until you have been penalized for being a frog in a previous incarnation. I continued to protest, and only felt more foolish at the inevitable response: "Everyone gets what's *perfect* for him," said Rennie. "Have pa-

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tience." And I had thought all you needed was sincerity.

I sulked in a corner and contemplated nefarious schemes to sneak up on Bal Bhagwan Ji. It was hopeless, I realized: as Diana Stone had pointed out, "Even the crummiest little Swami can read minds," and the most devoted follower was undoubtedly following my every move. As I stood on the steps, a mustached young man, fastidious in his *premie* mod attire, sat down at my side.

Steve O'Neill, 25, has been a DLM organizer in Boston for two years. Beantown has been especially receptive to the guru's grace: it ranks second only to Denver in the volume of activity and number of devotees—four ashrams and five of the less formal *premie* houses. O'Neill is currently a top officer in the World Peace Corps, the DLM front-group which raises money by any means necessary—from babysitting to installing car mufflers. It also provides security troops for any DLM event, such as a visit by a member of the Holy Family. For the moment, Steve O'Neill is on temporary reassignment in Denver, as general secretary of the local WPC ashram. "Everything within the Divine Light Mission is temporary these days," he says. "You just move around wherever needed, as the flow goes." Job assignment is not based on ability, just sincerity—"Guru Maharaj Ji's Grace gives us all the ability we need," according to Joan Apter. As a case in point, Michael Donner, the 24-year-old Executive Director of Personnel—one of the top three positions in the entire DLM—has been an active *premie* for only four months. "I was in jail for a year for draft resistance," Donner told me. A member of the "Beaver 55" (eight people charged with destroying draft records and destruction of Dow Chemical Company property), Donner received Knowledge almost two years ago, "but I did nothing with it until the aimlessness of my life caught up with me."

Steve O'Neill

Like Donner, Steve O'Neill was a revolutionary of sorts before his transmogrification, and in fact many top-echelon *premies* share a political background. O'Neill's story is a particularly interesting one.

"I joined the army to learn how to kill. I was really into weapons and the whole John Wayne syndrome. I was stoned out on acid when I enlisted, and I wanted to use the knowledge I gained to just, you know, blow up the whole government. I was a topnotch soldier, and got my classification as a weapons expert. They sent me to Korea, where I hung out with some black cats and we'd do things like set the library on fire, steal a bunch of weapons, stuff like that. It was a whole joke to us, but we were serious at the same time. Then I got myself thrown out on a drug charge—I was stoned all the time—and I went back to Long Island and got in with a bunch of old buddies who were ex-GIs too. We were just waiting for the shit to hit so we could go into the streets and tear down the system.

"We were pulling lots of robberies on the side. Finally everyone got busted—everyone but me. I slid. We'd been operating out of my family's basement, and one night we went out to sell this guy $1000 worth of dope, though we planned to rip him off. I stayed home. When the other guys told him to hand over the bread, he pulled out a badge and said, 'I'm a detective and you're all under arrest.' All of a sudden a helicopter searchlight flashed on them and five sharpshooters opened up. The guys dove into a nearby lake, where they were picked up on the other side. Then some other cops came to my house and were halfway down the basement stairs—the basement was full of bullets on the tables and barbiturates on the floors—when my father said 'Hey, wait a minute.' They stopped, walked back outside, and showed me the pictures of my buddies. 'Do you know these guys,' they asked. 'Yeah, they're my friends,' I answered. They said okay, and split. I never heard anything about it again. Even then I felt Guru Maharaj Ji's Grace—there was no reason I shouldn't have landed in the can. So I split for Ireland and got into a lot of acid and mountains. I met a *premie* who was so peaceful and beautiful that I instantly picked up on the vibe. I heard *satsang* for a couple of days in Dublin in the fall of 1971, received Knowledge, and totally blossomed out. I then organized some *satsang* programs in Ireland and started the first *premie* house there. It was so beautiful so . . . *perfect.*"

[SHOCK TROOPS FOR THE GURU]

Premies, like Steve O'Neill, Joan Apter, Diana Stone and indeed, Rennie Davis are the Avatar's front line, and they use meditation as a kind of cosmic Gatorade. "We meditate 24 hours a day on a subconscious level, and at least two hours a day on a conscious level," says Joan Apter. Mass meditation on the "conscious level" is a sight to behold. During my visit to Denver, I would walk into the large room of the ashram at night to sleep and have to wend my way through an obstacle course of frozen figurines with sheets draped about them, eyes immovably tuned into the fourth dimension. It was like one of those horror movies where you need the tinted goggles to see the ghosts, and I'd left mine home. Then about 5:00 a.m. all the devotees would jump up from slumber with a Hindu war-whoop and chant for an hour before going back into meditation. By seven o'clock they had shared a communal breakfast and were off to do their work. *Premies* rarely have more than five hours sleep a night, yet they sustain an incredibly energetic schedule.

The *premies* have but five commandments to follow: 1. Never put off 'til tomorrow what you can do today. 2. Never delay in attending *satsang.* 3. Always have faith in God. 4. Constantly meditate and remember the Name. (The Name is something revealed in the Knowledge session.) 5. Never keep any doubt in the mind.

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These are the written rules; there is another set of unwritten ones which *premies* must follow religiously so long as they reside in an ashram. They stay away from movies and general "entertainment." They never swear. They must surrender all worldly possessions to the DLM. And they must be celibate.

"There is something much higher, much more pleasureable than sex," says Steve O'Neill. "We just don't need it." Never? "Well, once me and my old lady got to making out in a closet and we just couldn't restrain ourselves, so we balled. But we had to leave the ashram, of course."

Carol Greenberg heads up the Divine Organization of Women, a recently formed adjunct to the DLM. "Celibacy is actually very liberating," she says. "It removes the sexual objectification of women a great deal." DOW is charged with responsibility for recruiting women into the organization. Though she uses the terminology of women's liberation, Carol Greenberg does not view her organization as part of the women's movement. And indeed, the Divine position on women is not likely to have a broad appeal to feminists.

The majority of housemothers, *premies* responsible for maintaining domestic tranquility in the ashram, are women, as are the cooks and kitchenworkers. "The woman has naturally taken her place as housemother, and the man has naturally taken his place as coordinator, organizer and breadwinner," says O'Neill. Joan Apter told me she believes there are fundamentally different qualities in men and women—"but it's not a problem within the organization, only to people on the outside looking in. I have never met a woman working in an ashram kitchen that wasn't happy, and that's what matters. Everybody wants to be liberated, free from limitations. But when you identify yourself with a limitation—whether woman, man, black or white, you automatically create a frustration. When Guru Maharaj Ji was four years old he was asked what the difference between girls and boys was. He replied that 'girls have much softer hearts than boys.'" Does a soft heart a better dishwasher make? I asked. "No, but service is service, whether designing plans for the perfect city or cooking a meal. You get the same satisfaction because of Guru Maharaj Ji's Grace."

One might wonder, then, why the Perfect Master even bothers with a Divine Organization of Women. Rennie Davis sees it as a potentially important instrument for spreading the Knowledge. "The first realization is that you're not your body and you're not your mind. *Premies* say 'I'm not a woman, I'm not black,' whatever. But now that people know the greatest service of the Knowledge is to reach people where they're at with Guru Maharaj Ji's message, then we begin to move beyond that phase. Although we are actually the light inside ourselves, to reach women we need a national women's organization that will go out and say 'we have the ultimate in consciousness-raising.' And we need black groups and Indian groups and all kinds of ways to propagate the Knowledge." (The lone black *premie* I met in Denver still hadn't reached that particular stage: "I'm not black—I'm a manifestation of my soul, not my pigmenta-

What's behind the confusion in the White House?

George Reedy, former Press Secretary to LBJ and author of *Twilight of the Presidency,* concentrates in his new book on two central problems of the Presidency: the king-like isolation of the President and the pervasive belief in public relations. His analysis predates Watergate yet cuts so deep as to foreshadow it. As he puts it: "Power breeds isolation [which] leads to capricious use of power." The President's public appearances have been so artfully managed that no one can take them seriously; the President's establishment critics have been so in awe of his office that they cannot confront him. In conflicts with Congress, the President has tended to be indifferent to the fate of domestic programs, while in foreign affairs he has been virtually uncontrollable. Reedy shows how this state of affairs came about, beginning with the growth of Presidential power under FDR. No politically minded person should miss this important book which so clearly bares the realities behind today's headlines.

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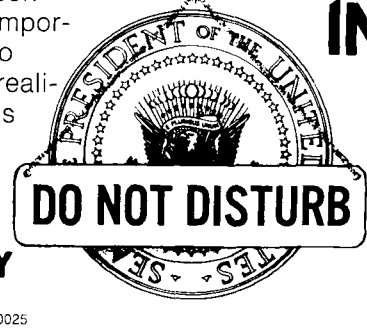

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tion," he told me.)

"A lot of the people who came into the organization went through no women's consciousness at all," continues Rennie, "and that's a problem. Women are still called chicks and lots of the old weird things still exist. Our language needs to fit our new consciousness and it doesn't always do that. But it's getting worked out."

To the DLM's credit, many of the key administrators in the national organization are women, as are some of the most intelligent and impressive *premies* I met. Yet no women serve as ashram general secretaries in the United States, though three of the four Canadian ashrams have female general secretaries. In any event, sexism is hardly a major concern in the Divine Order of Things.

[DIVINE IMPERIALISM]

The Divine Light Mission is growing like a mushroom on a spring day," says Rennie Davis, and figures supplied by the organization tend to bear him out—even allowing for a tendency to exaggerate its own momentum. From Joan Apter and her two friends in 1971, the North American branch has grown to some 35,000 devotees. Only two Mahatmas—instillers of Knowledge—work the States, and each conducts one or two daily sessions with at least 15 initiates. They are followed wherever they go by scores of disciples seeking to prepare themselves for receiving Knowledge.

Coast to coast, the DLM has some 35 ashrams, and 30 *premie* houses will soon become ashrams. In additions there are at least 300 other *premie* houses, and they too will one day blossom. The Satguru's burgeoning empire of services and projects falls under the aegis of the Divine Light Mission, Inc., a non-profit organization. The new Divine United Organization, however, will soon take over the material end of the Mission's work, leaving the DLM free to concentrate on "spiritual propagation." In addition, the World Peace Organization repairs cars, runs print shops, supervises thrift shops, builds sound systems, provides babysitters and carpentry work to anyone who needs them, all profits going back into the parent organization.

A prison program gives *satsang* in six states, and a drug program operates in eight states. Shri Hans Productions publishes a slick magazine, *And It Is Divine,* whose circulation has risen from 20,000 to 130,000 in four issues. It also puts out a weekly tabloid, *Divine Times,* which claims a nationwide circulation of 30,000. Thirty radio stations around the country carry a regular half-hour show about Guru Maharaj Ji, and the programming is adjusted to mesh with the station format. Recently, the Mission has sponsored a syndicated television show which originates in Minneapolis.

Then there's Shri Hans Humanitarian, which operates a New York health clinic—staffed by 20 doctors and seven nurses—to provide free health care to anyone needing it. Starting this fall, the Mission will launch an elementary school in Denver for 100 *premie* children who have received Knowledge. Eventually, this operation will be expanded to include kindergarten through high school.

Equally impressive are what Guru Maharaj Ji describes as his technological toys: a Cesna Cardinal single-engine plane worth $30,000 and a Cesna twin engine worth $190,000; a Mercedes Benz in New York worth $12,000 and a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud in Los Angeles worth $26,000; a $12,000 mobile home in Montrose, California, which will soon be sold to buy a mobile van for the medical clinic; a movie camera worth $12,000 and numerous related sound devices. DLM's property holdings do not yet rival those of the Catholic Church, but they are numerous and growing. They include a Divine residence in Los Angeles worth $76,000; an ashram in Denver worth $41,000 and one in Hyattsville, Md. valued at $55,000; and several hundred acres of property in New York, Rhode Island, Vermont and Maine, donated by *premies* and their friends.

[THE GURU'S BENEFACTORS]

Michael Bergman, 26, keeps track of all this wealth in his capacity as executive accountant for the Divine Light Mission. He defies the stereotype of the hard-nosed, close-mouthed bookkeeper, and he allowed me to inspect the organization's records and interview its donors. Most, he says, are *premies* who have inherited money and have been inspired to support the word of Guru Maharaj Ji with their own worldly goods. Last year, five *premies* together gave over $110,000. So far this year three more have given $60,000 and in all likelihood two financial angels will contribute close to $200,000 *each* by the time this article appears. Also, he says that "dozens and dozens" of cherubs have donated gifts of $1,000 to $10,000.

A Houston *premie,* whom we will call Cliff, has made the largest contribution to date: $40,000. "I couldn't see how I was ever going to use that money," he told me, "It was a real weight on me. I never really considered it mine. And the dividends and interest were so high that I had to pay income tax even though I was unemployed." After receiving Knowledge, Cliff traveled to India last November as part of an excursion of 3,500 *premies* to hang out in Prem Nagar and witness the antics of Guru Maharaj Ji. "After experiencing His Divine Love, there was no doubt in my mind what to do with the money. He has converted the medium of exchange from dollars to love." His father disowned him, but Cliff says, "We communicate now. We just don't talk about the money." The parents of a Wisconsin *premie* reacted less benevolently on learning that their daughter had given the DLM her $20,000-plus inheritance. They hired the notorious Frecog—"Free Our Children from the Children of God"—to kidnap her. (These thugs have become infamous for the heavy-handed tactics they use to convince Jesus freaks to renounce their fervor.)

The total bill for last November's trip to India was $638,000, as while the spiritual aspects of the sojourn may have been *perfect,* the logistics were something less. In Delhi, Indian customs officials confiscated Joan Apter's suitcase containing some $28,000 in cash, traveler's checks and jewelry, creating a minor international incident. (She did not declare it properly.) It has yet to be returned.

But such figures pale alongside the most ambitious project yet undertaken by the Mission: the Divine City which, according the Guru Maharaj Ji, will

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rise from nothing in one year's time somewhere in California. It will be the physical manifestation of the heaven-on-earth one receives through knowledge, with design, technology and environment to boggle the mind of man. A tract near Santa Barbara seems the likely location, subject of course to Maharaj Ji's final approval. The purchase price is reportedly $11 million, including $1 million down payment.

It may well take a miracle to accomplish this ultimate vision. In this instance, the miracle worker appears to be an unlikely character named Joe Gould, a 58-year-old Denver businessman who owns the Kitteridge Building housing the DLM national headquarters. Leaders of the Mission discount Gould's reputation as a robber baron. "Guru Maharaj Ji tells us that no matter how evil a man has become in his society, when he encounters *satsang* his humanness can come out," explains Bob Mishler, 28, the tall, soft-spoken and very elusive National Director of the DLM. "Gould has been very kind to us, and has expressed a willingness to work with us on the Divine City in the same way he has worked with us on renting us office space." As a landlord, he has been very kind indeed; while charging a nominal rent, he has given them $18,000 to fix up their offices to their exact needs.

"He has told us he'd be willing to arrange the land purchase to enable us to have the best terms and lowest payment schedule," says accountant Bergman. "As for actually giving us some of the money, that's very vague right now. But anything can happen—at one point when we were negotiating the office deal, he said he might give us the entire building."

Gould himself says that while he has not really thought about it, "I wouldn't dismiss the possibility of giving them some of the money." He owns oil wells in Texas, office buildings, theatres and luxury housing in the Denver area, and real estate in Las Vegas. His manufacturing concern ranks as the largest producer of charcoal lighter fluid in the world. By his own admission he has never felt compelled to help any other group of people. He is drawn to the Divine Disciples, however, "because this is a different breed of young people. Irrespective of their philosophy, which I don't know much about, I think it's wonderful what they're doing. I admire their spirit—they're always full of smiles, and they dress very neat and clean. I consider it a pleasure and privilege to be of help to them."

["IF YOU NEED ME . . ."]

As Kris Kristoffersen says, "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." You might just as well say the obverse—that slavery's just another word for everything to gain, and obeisance to Guru Maharaj Ji has its attractions. For one thing, it offers a living, loving teacher who serves as a shield from all worry and an umbilical cord to eternity.

In one last bit of *satsang* I received in Denver, a *premie* compared mankind to "a fish going downstream with a hook caught in his mouth and a line of string attached to the pole." Thinking that this was actually special *satsang* for outdoorsmen, I mused aloud that the string must be the Satguru. "No," he said. "It's free will."

So just "let go" like Rennie: the string will snap; the crows will fly away. You will discover heaven on earth and death itself will become a delicious experience, offering reincarnation, not as a zombie condemned to walk about with doubt, uncertainty and despair, but as one of the enlightened elect blessed with the Knowledge of Truth. Or you may prefer to swim around in the cosmos, and you can then—if you choose—know the pleasures of eternal life as a formless spirit.

The Guru Maharaj Ji will solve your problems, whatever they may be. There are no sexual hangups in the Divine Light Mission because there is no sex, and Bal Bhagwan Ji told Rennie Davis that "we'll just eliminate distinctions between men and women eventually." Who needs it anyway? No sex, no movies, no rock festivals, no all-night poker games. I asked Steve O'Neill if the *premies* have any vices at all. "Yes," he replied. "A couple of times a week we go out and get a Baskin-Robbins ice cream cone."

It is the ultimate irony of the Movement's search for answers that there are none—only more questions, more struggle which grows ever more difficult as the questions become ever harder to ask. Maharaj Ji tells us to knock our heads on the four corners of the earth, "and if you like any of them, stay there. But if you don't, keep me in mind." There are plenty of bruised noggins drifting around right now. And it seems altogether likely that, in coming months, many of them will be donated to the Divine Light Mission. ■

JOHN LEE HOOKER

(From page 39)

roll, the LP and the 45-rpm record, and the prosperity of the 1950s vastly increased the record buying market. The bluesmen had gained overall, but in the new market of 1960, Hooker and his contemporaries held about the same position bluesmen had held in the 1930's—marginal but profitable enough for those who specialized in it. "We were doing our thing," Hooker remembered, "but nothing was happening." The breakthrough days were a decade behind him, and he and the others faced years of gigging in the same clubs to crowds growing old with them.

Suddenly a new and unexpected avenue opened in the early '60s: folk music. The name as used by its earnest adherents meant nothing specific in terms of musical style. Old ballads, new ballads, "protest" and "message" songs, blues, and hillbilly; Mahalia Jackson, Doc Watson, and Lonnie Donegan; toothless old men, long-haired girls, and clean-cut boys in ice-cream striped buttondown shirts—it was folk music if you could sell it as that. Son House, Mississippi John Hurt, Skip James, Elizabeth Cotton, Big Joe Williams, plus fiddlers aplenty were found and put on stages, many of them for the first time in years. The only reason most were remembered was because they had once been successful enough to record. Hooker was one of the "folk blues" discoveries. He played on a bill at New York's Gerde's Folk City with Bob Dylan when that bluesman was starting out. On the folk circuit—Van Morrison travelled with him often—he played acoustic guitar alone, something he had not done in years. He enjoyed it. The folk fans were slavishly attentive, and he felt a kinship with the young musicians learning the blues.

The later '60s brought him even more recognition. Few rock or blues

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bands did his songs as they did those of Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters, and Elmore James, because Hooker's material defied copying. But many bands did the one chord endless boogie their own way, and one, Canned Heat, made John Lee their personal Buddha of the blues. With him they recorded several excellent LP's which had huge sales, in the new market perhaps equivalent to the success of "Boogie Chillen." By the early '70s he was finally making "big bread," and he moved from the flatlands of Oakland to the green suburban hills which overlook the whole sweep of San Francisco Bay.

[NEVER STOP THE BOOGIE]

The Montclair Community Center, a small stone building in a pretty park, is a focal point for the Montclair neighborhood where John Lee Hooker lives, and a hangout for local teenagers. Tonight he's agreed to play to open a series of Saturday night concerts. The room is filled and smoky; blue and pink lights are the only illumination, and though the average age of the crowd is 16, it feels like a funky blues dive. A local band is on first. It features a Chicano guitar player, black bassist, and white drummer, and they all play breathtakingly fast. The guitarist is all over his axe. After five songs there is a certain sameness to their approach. They get a rousing hand as they go off.

A wait for Hooker. Finally the members of his Coast to Coast Blues Band are plugged in and ready. As usual they play several numbers without their leader. The two guitarists play fast and loud, packing in the notes and weird effects, splashing sounds on a crowd already drenched. Eventually John Lee steps to the center and sits in the chair waiting for him. He picks up the guitar and checks the tuning. His foot slaps the floor four times; a blues begins, slow and steady. He does not survey the crowd; he stares as if sightless straight out into the darkness. His left hand stays rooted in one spot at the top of the neck; his right, without a pick, floats over the strings. Mostly he rubs at them with the meat of his thumb. Sometimes he pulls upward with his index finger, and then he slaps all of them with his palm.

He sings and it is hard to make out the words. He loves a girl but she won't stay. Her name is Stella Mae. The band plays as before but considerably more subdued. They watch Hooker for clues; if he gives any, they are invisible. Suddenly he stops playing entirely, letting his hands hang limp. His foot doesn't stop, neither does the power of his presence. His singing is even and resonant. "Oh, baby, why did you have to go?" Then, almost before the action could be seen, his left hand has darted up the neck and a bolt of sound—twisted, searing, awful—travels through the room and is gone. Again silence from him except for the beating foot. The band continues until he raises his left hand, then drops it. End.

For an hour and a half this goes on. The tempos vary, but nothing is as frantic as it was before John Lee came on. The audience listens attentively. Hooker smiles occasionally, is more often meditative. The hour grows late, not too late for one more. He beats out a tempo, a bit faster this time. His guitar gets the song going, then he stops playing again. He puts the guitar down and stands up. He takes the microphone from its stand and moves to the edge of the stage. "Now momma said to poppa, 'I don't want that boy to boogie-woogie.' And poppa said to momma, 'You let him boogie-woogie, he's a man now, let him have his fun.' "

"I'm 50," John Lee had told me a few days before. He said it with a trace of ruefulness but also with a loose grin that made us equals. Now he is standing and dancing, his skinny legs shaking, his right hand slapping his thigh. "Oh I felt so good, went out and boogied all night long, love to boogie woogie." The crowd dances with him, the spell complete. "Yes I love to do the boogie." John Lee's body weaves back and forth as loose as a baby's. "Love to do the boogie, get up and do the boogie." Dance and sound are one thing. The rooms smells of fresh sweat. "Never stop the boogie, hey, hey, hey." The small red lights of the amplifiers shine like eyes. "Gotta do the boogie, oh, oh, oh yeah!"

Sometime it was over. The band starts packing up the equipment. John Lee Hooker steps off the stage and starts chatting with some friends. The

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exhausted kids trooping out into the night don't notice him.

Any of John Lee Hooker's recent recordings or the Hooker-Besman re-releases, are an excellent introduction to his art. The complete discography is vast and not widely available. Chess has issued an LP, The Real Folk Blues, *of material produced by Ralph Bass. It includes his foghorn version of "Waterfront." For VeeJay Hooker recorded as an R&B singer; beside him and his guitar there is a chorus and band. The songs are closer to standard blues than most of his work, and the full instrumentation is less stark a foil than silence, but Hooker comes through like gangbusters.*

This article has been excerpted from a chapter of Boogie Lightning. ■

SATURDAY REVIEW

(From page 25)

The mood grew somber. Clouds veiled the sun. Torrential rains drenched the parched land. As if by sympathetic magic, $5 million burbled their way west. With them arrived Frederick S. Wyle, the investors' watchdog. (He was awarded the full title of chairman of the executive committee. Charney retained his triad of titles but, together with John Veronis, agreed to take a cut in pay: from $75,000 a year to $50,000.) A lawyer, a former investment banker, and the retired manager of Robert McNamara's technological whiz kids in their Pentagon heyday—Wyle was a blunt interrogator, a no-nonsense man who, alas, knew little about publishing. The order of the day was "to make the move now into the monthly mode." As one result, Up Front was abolished as a weekly section within the four monthlies; the staff was scattered—Cowley and McLaughlin moved into *The Arts,* I went to *Society*. From then on what went into Up Front was determined by the staffs of the various special-interest monthlies.

From the promoters' point of view, the switch was logical. Charney: "As more and more monthly business is sold and the weekly business becomes less and less important, and as the monthly business is renewed at the full copy rate, the average revenue per copy delivered to the subscriber will climb dramatically—and so will profits." From our point of view, dispersal meant the end of our independent existence. Well, but complete freedom—the large liberty of the unemployed—lay in ambush a few months down the road.

CHAPTER IX

(Being a terse calendar of crucial events leading up to the announcement that the shebang is reorganizing under Chapter 11:)

Sunday, April 15:
Charney, Wyle and publisher Bob Moore fly to New York for chat with investors. They bear detailed TOP SECRET proposal outlining plan to merge the four magazines into one (What? Yes, to undo that which had just been done.), thereby making it possible to drastically cut staff, operating expenses, if not $4 million owed to typesetters, printers, authors, etc.

Monday, April 16 through Wednesday, April 18:
Board meeting in New York. Much talk about proposed new magazine. Some trouble, perhaps, in convincing investors to reverse the immensely expensive process they have yet to pay the bills for? On the other hand, some discussion of the shame of all that money going down the drain; of how a couple of the magazines are starting to catch on; of experience gained—original expectations too high; now sobered folk will settle down, roll up sleeves for tough months ahead, get cracking. Long consideration given to plight of employees stranded on alien shore, of how to pay severance, etc. to the three-quarters of the staff that would be cashiered to clear the decks for the new magazine. Question: About how much would it cost to get this new thing going? Answer: About $4 million. No computer needed to ascertain total of $4 million in debts, $4 million needed in new financing.

Why is it, then, that the board members seem so ready to voice hearty approval of the new venture? Is it because they must send a dupe back west? It takes time to prepare a file under any chapter of the bankruptcy law. Meanwhile, to protect assets from creditors about to spring, the board cannot—may not, Wyle explained the following week—let its left hand out in

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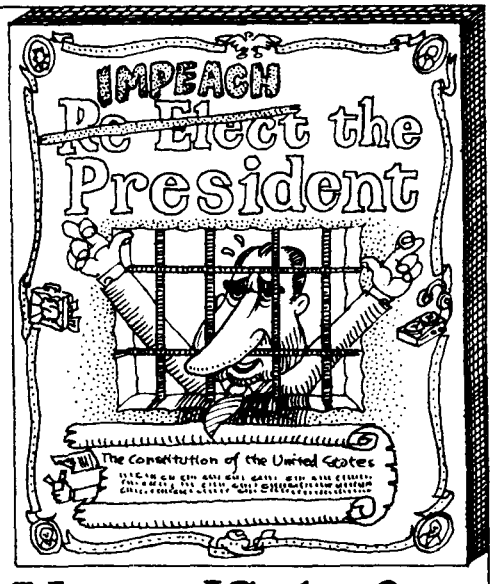

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San Francisco know what the right is up to in New York. If word should get out prematurely, creditors would descend *en masse*, assets vanish. At any rate, publisher Bob Moore boarded a jet Wednesday night with tidings that would cheer up the folks out west—at least the few who would still have a job: The new monthly magazine was in the bag!

Thursday, April 19

Ron Kriss summons select group of editors to announce: It's in the bag! The elect, who now "know" they have jobs for a long time to come, rejoice. Planning for the new 4-in-1 magazine booms ahead—in San Francisco, that is. In New York, the board prepares to suspend publication and to reorganize under Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy law.

Friday, April 20

Cross-purpose meetings continue in New York, the critical city, and San Francisco, pretty but dumb. Air of suspense at S.F. office. Frisbee becomes an indoor sport. (Charles McLaughlin: "There was a lot of frisbee throwing at *Look* just before it went under.") Typewriters fall silent; outbursts of revelry, song, replace normal clack and ding.

Monday, April 23

Charney and Wyle return to their homes in the west. From New York some prudent person calls the McCall's printing plant in Dayton, Ohio, tells them to stop the color presses. SR already owes McCall's about a million. Enough is enough.

Tuesday, April 24

A meeting of all managing editors is called for 10:30. Still high on the surprisingly good dope ("It's in the bag!") received from New York via Bob Moore, those assembled expect this to be a working conference. Nick, looking ashen, slips into the conference room to say that Wyle has just left his house, is on his way over. "Give us 20 minutes." He saunters off. Inside the conference room, a managing editor talks with an art director, a long-time acquaintance of Nick. The art director has already designed the cover for the first issue of the mythical monthly.

Time, which must have a stop, is running out. The news release announcing that *SR* is suspending publication is due to be let out of the bag—by Cousins in New York, by Wyle in San Francisco—at 11:30 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time, 2:30 Eastern Daylight Time. And here it is, nigh on 11, and Wyle is nowhere in sight. Waiting for him out on Pacific Avenue, Charney and Bob Moore pitch pennies. Wyle rolls up at last. The meeting gets under way. One crucial person is missing—a fellow who, by rights, ought to be told before his subordinates: executive editor Ron Kriss.

"We've been hit by a tidal wave," Wyle begins. He goes on to talk about Chapter 11, about Cousins, about hopes. When Wyle is done, Nick, succinct for the first time in ages, says that he's very sorry, and "We got one foot in the future, but we couldn't get the rest of our body in." Nick's apologia over, discussion begins on how to break the news to the rest of the employees—a chore that must be done before the press swarms in in the wake of the 11:30 news release.

The meeting is about to break up when Ron Kriss arrives. Stooped, a wistful smile on his face, a bit chagrined at arriving so late, he holds a briefcase in one hand, a cup of coffee in the other; a folded *New York Times* is tucked under one arm. Nick glances over his shoulder to see who's come in. "Oh, Ron," he says. "We tried to get in touch with you last night and a couple of times this morning. We've just made the announcement to everybody here that we've gone into Chapter 11." The executive editor waits to hear what else this peculiar young man will say. "And what's happening is," Charney goes on, "we're hopeful for a reorganization with Norman Cousins."

A fine howd'youdo!

[CHAPTER X]

The massed employees, duly informed, were duly stunned. It was still Tuesday morning when they recovered from the shock. Friday would be the last day of work, Wyle was saying, though the court might allow those whose labors would serve to protect the company's assets to work an additional week. The last regular *SR* checks would be issued Friday; those who worked the following week

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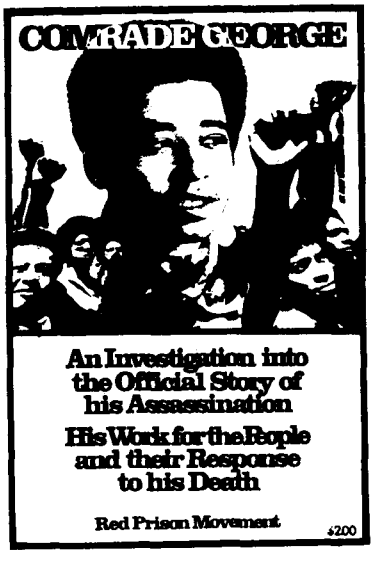
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would be paid for that week out of a $200,000 kitty established by the investors. Yes, the kitty would be used to help defray some portion of moving expenses for those people the company had brought west. (That night Norman Cousins called Wyle to say that he would contribute $10,000 to the kitty out of his own pocket. Later, employees would scrape together close to $1,000 to provide help for especially needy cases; also, almost all of them signed letters to the investors thanking them for what help they had already provided, and urging them to provide more to pay for such "normal business obligations" as full severance pay, compensation for unused vacation, unpaid expense accounts, contractual obligations.)

Wyle went on to encourage his audience to "adopt a positive frame of mind, to set to work looking for another job," and to check in with the Human Resources Department to find out about unemployment benefits. Nick, after repeating his "one foot in the future" speech, likewise encouraged everyone to be "opportunity-oriented." Wyle then invited one and all to drink champagne in the lobby; those who preferred to sulk were extended that option. It was a free country. Ah, and we were all at liberty now.

Corks popped. Rapidly emptied bottles of Franzia champagne clanked into wastebaskets. A sculptor from New York, walking by and hearing sounds of revelry, walked in to join the celebration. Oh, this was a wake, was it? Well, in any case—cheers!

Upstairs, on the third floor, a heavy basset hound brought west by Frank Kendig, managing editor of *SR of the Sciences,* paused beside a handsome (and unpaid for) oak table, circled the chosen spot on the yellow carpet a couple of times, and let drop a long, curved turd. Bosley had kept a tight sphincter for months. The din of the wake below was apparently too much for him. His contribution posed a legal dilemma: Did this *object trouvé,* so rich in symbolic content "at this point in time," constitute an asset? ■

ERRATA

The article on "The Legacy of Amilcar Cabral" (*Ramparts,* April 1973) was translated from French by Peoples Translation Service, 2490 Channing Way, Room 501, Berkeley, CA 94704.

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LETTERS

(From page 9)

[LET FREEDOM RING]

Editors / I am 13 years old, live in Jackson, Mississippi, and go to Chastain Junior High. In Mississippi, such problems as racism and other prejudices are quite visible. I've also lived in California where the problems of pollution are made very plain.

I've written a song to the tune of a popular patriotic song, to show how inappropriate the patriotic song is. I would like people to hear what I have to say. If they don't like it, that's OK, but if they do, maybe they will ask the same questions I have.

My country 'tis of thee,
Land where the eagles leave,
of thee I sing.
Land where the Indians died,
Land of Insecticide,
On every garbage barge
Let freedom ring.

My country 'tis of thee,
Where is our liberty?
It's not here now.
We want our equal rights
And for that we will fight
On the bloody mountainside
Until Freedom reigns.

This country betrays me,
No home, no food for me,
I soon will die.
I want my children
To be like pilgrims
And change this wretched land.
Finally freedom reigns.

Frieda Silberger
Jackson, Miss.

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—Nixon's Watergate Speech
May 1, 1973

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